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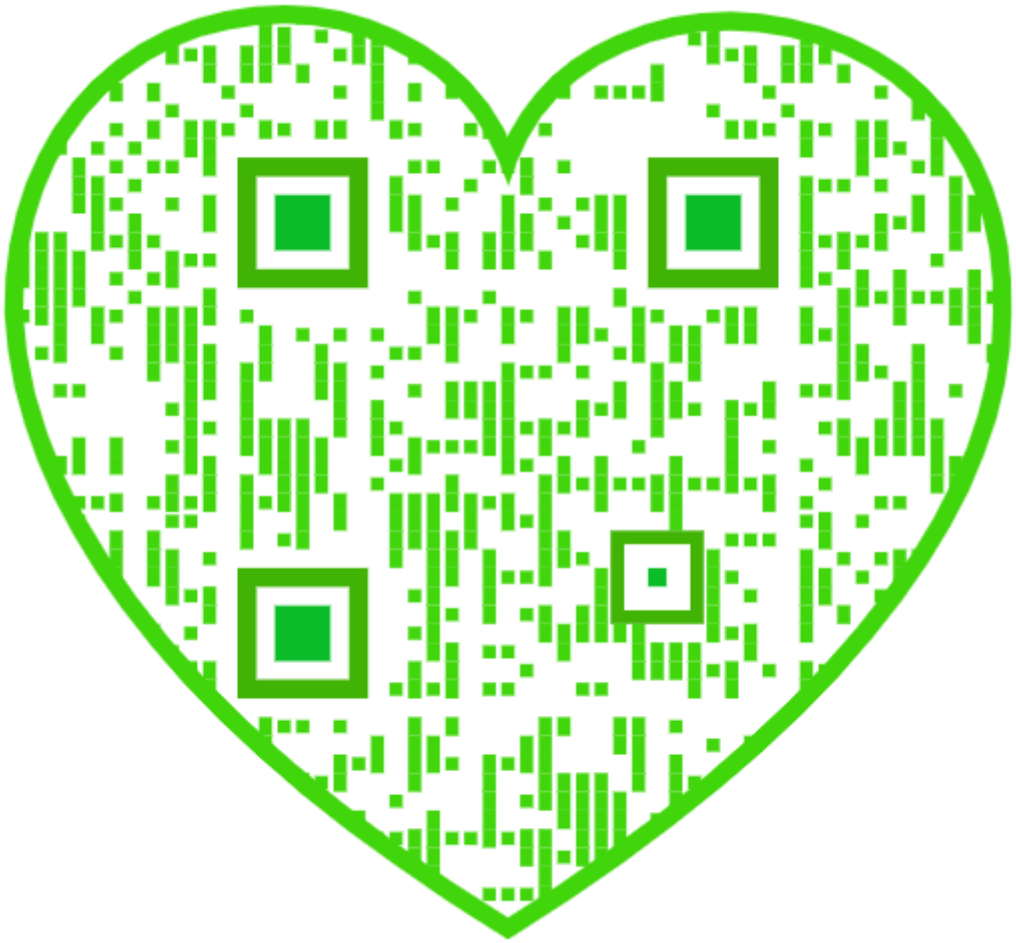

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How to Make a Shoe.

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BY

JNO. P. HEADLEY, Jr.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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Shoemakers are known both far and wide,
As men who always cut up *side*—
Horse sometimes, also cow leather,
To meet the changes in the weather.
Sheep and goats are often slain;
Both unite to make it plain
That sheep is used for lining nice,
When goat alone would not suffice;
Just so with calf as well as kid.
Some use these linen-lined,
And think it quite the best, for those
Who feel themselves refined.
Refined or not, we think it true
Our feet need some protection;
To do whate'er they have to do,
We make our own selection.
Select at all times the best we can,
Both of shoemakers as well as shoes,
This is much the better plan,
And learns us how to choose.

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INTRODUCTION.

The Author of the book in hand, having passed through the various scenes through which he would accompany his readers, was prompted to make this offering to the craft and the public in order to relieve his mind of the thoughts had upon the subject of making shoes, as well as to contribute something of a literary character which, in the broad range of possibilities, may become useful as a text-book, or family-book, for those who may feel interested in making or wearing shoes, and perhaps lead to something better. Realizing the imperfections and shortcomings of the human family, to some extent at least, no claim beyond that which you are disposed to put upon it is held, so that any communication will be gladly received and noted. This opportunity is also taken to express thanks for some valuable suggestions from the U. S. Bureau of Education, and others, concerning the publication of this little volume, and in its present shape you are invited to read and make the best use of it you can.

AUTHOR.

The subject, seated on a chair,
One knee the other to rest,
Has his measure taken fair,
The foot at ease is best.
The Artist views the foot,
And straightway takes the length,
By measuring it from heel to toe,
His *size* brings content.
From twelve to eighteen inches long—
This *stick* has many *sizes;*
Three to the inch is now our song,
Subject to compromises.
Some feet have long toes behind—
In the language of the *craft;*
These are not so hard to find,
And oft to us been waft.
Our Artist here will best succeed,
If a little head he can measure,
For out of that comes very much
To make the feet a treasure.

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Next, around the heel a strap we bring,
To the centre of the curve,
A leather or linen *strap* is used,
And don't affect the nerve.

The marks on this an inch represents,
Also fractions of inch preserved ;
When made complete it then presents
An appearance well deserved.

Around the heel, I've already said,
But that is not quite so ;
For around in part and through instead
Will make it more the go.

Now let us here make up our minds,
If this trade we would study,
That the *craft* is subject to many fines
If the subject gets very *muddy*.

With strap in hand the *instep* measure—
Be sure you get it right;
For at this place some have a treasure,
Which prompts them oft to fight.

A little *lump* we will it now call,
Not knowing the exact name of it;
Nor let our *strap* the least bit fall,
But measure just above it.

When we've done this, and done quite well,
Another move will follow,
Which takes us nearly on the *ball*,
And brings us from the *hollow*.

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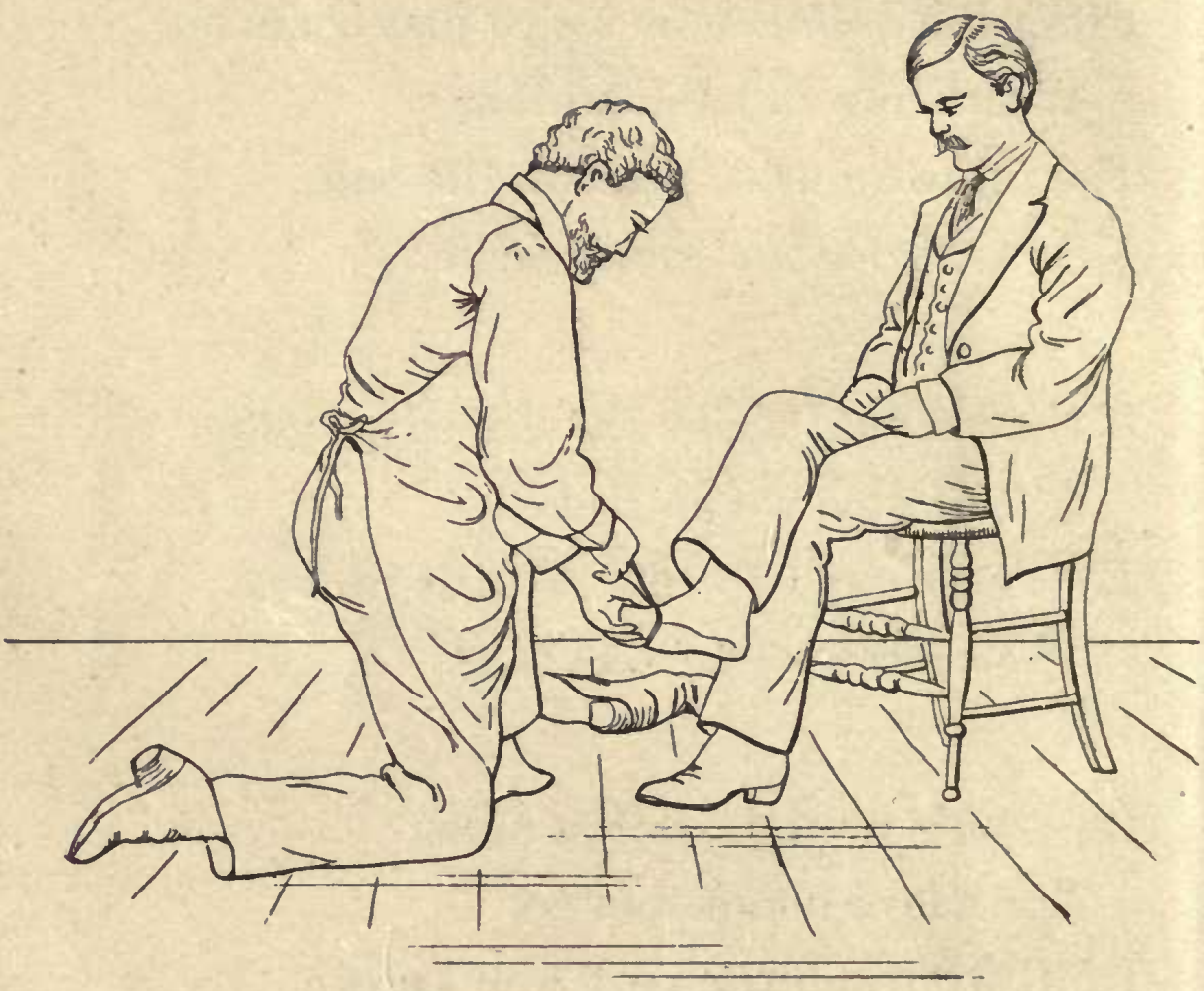
From the *hollow* now we've just come out,
With strap in hand to take
The measure neat, near on the *ball*,
So that our *fits* won't shake.

If they should shake the remedy comes,
A false sole we do make,
To please our subjects at their homes
The *soles* we there do take.

Onward now the way we press,
And move along just so,
Until we reach the part well known
To be the toe, the toe.



This is the place of which folks do talk,
If there is any pressure,
Because they cannot easy walk,
The *shoey* missed the measure.

Just below the *ball*, across the toes,
Is where we next are found ;
For there is nothing worn like *shoes*
When used upon the ground.

From here we feel like soaring higher,
And soon get at the ankle,
Which must be fit to suit the buyer,
Thus avoiding any wrangle.

The *ankle* reached, we then with care
Measure neat and true ;
If anything is noticed there,
'Twill surely be the shoe.

That notice is just what we want,
From that we get our living ;
And if we make a miss on that,
It might be past forgiving.

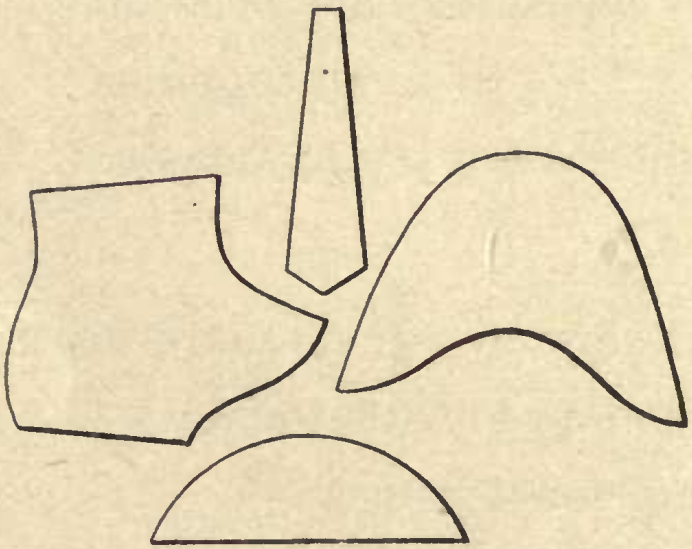
From toe to ankle we have come,
With an uncertain height,
And with the measures we've put down
Will now add that right.

To have the height right is our aim ;
Some like shoes high, some low ;
But to have them fit is all the same,
And this we try to show.

Some in one way, some in another,
These measures have been taken,
Until we have them all together,
We should not try to shapen.

To work now by our measure marked
Will be our constant aim ;
A pattern must be cut—
To start with that is plain.

But plainer still the shoe will be
From the pattern we shall cut,
Because we think you'll all agree
What's opened should be shut.

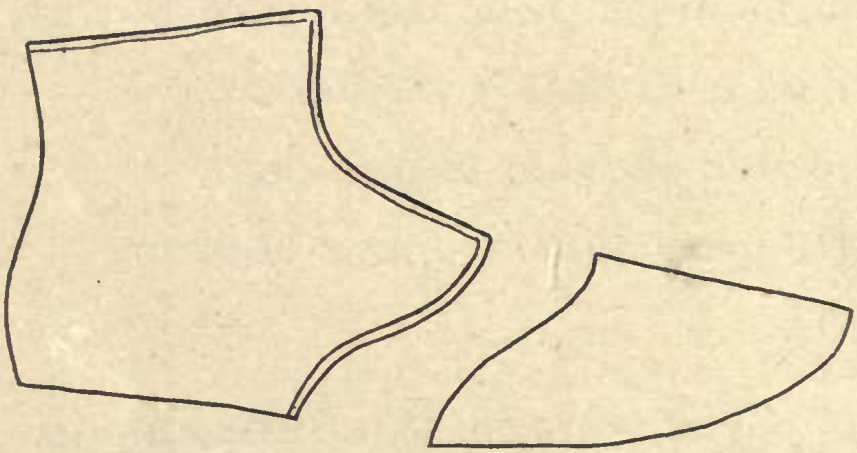


Before our eyes the *patterns* come,
The shapes are clearly seen,
A *vamp* and *quarter*, with a *tongue*,
Worked just in between.

A stiffening of *sole* has found its way,
And asks that it be shown,
In order, at some future day,
Its use might be made known.

The parts, you see, stand thus alone,
But have a close relation;
Because these parts must all be shown
To keep their proper station.

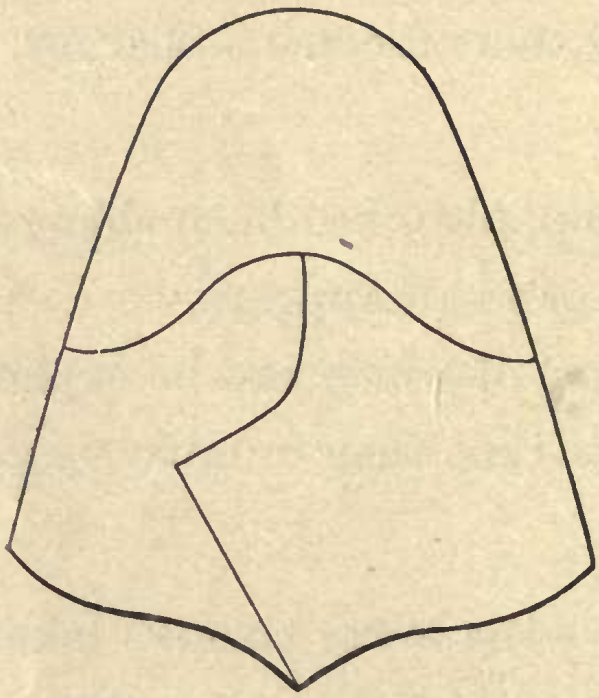
One part not seen, in shape the same,
Is *cut* and called the *lining*,
Upon which each *quarter* must be placed —
We'll not stop here defining —



But show in this cut, if you please,
The lining a little larger,
With the *quarter* pasted on it smooth,
If not there'll come a charger.

The *vamp*, also, has been changed,
Only one-half appears,
The cause of which can be explained
In less time than number years.

When we the lower corners take,
And match them well in fact,
The *centre* we at once do make,
Which guides the following act—



The act of uniting *quarter* and *vamp*,
With *paste* or *cement* for sewing,
Is done with care, as in this cut,
The fitness of things is showing.

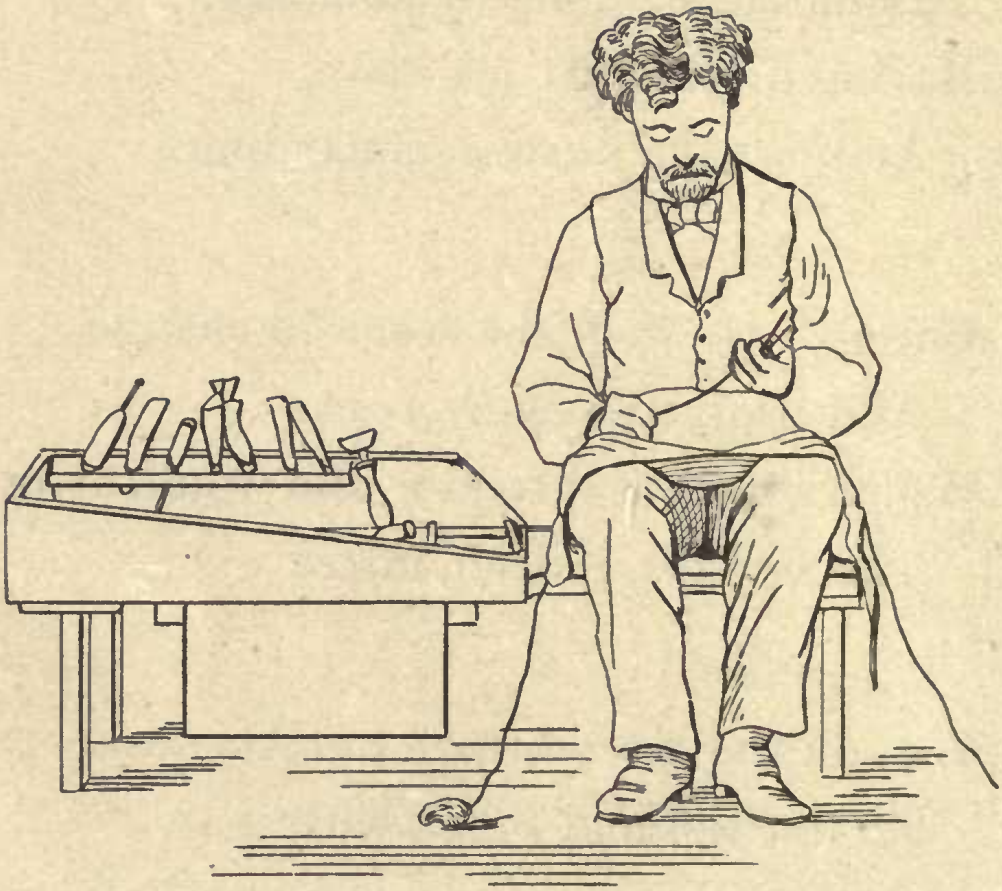
The centre mark on the vamp we'll use,
To get the quarters placed best,
By putting the vamp upon the two,
One-half inch above to rest.

One *end* is reached, but not the last;
This *end* from *flax* or cotton
Is made by some men very fast,
If the *flax* is not too rotten.

The work which we have now passed through
Could all be done by standing,
Having a *board* to cut upon,
And *one* the *paste* commanding.

But now we wish the scene to change,
And begin the *ending* act;
Which comes first to him who would arrange
The *threads*, indeed, intact.

We roll the *thread* upon our *knee*,
To untwist and break with ease,
And place the *cords*, one, two, and three,
So that the points are formed, if you please.



By having the *points* one below the other,
The *thread* kept free from a knot,
We will avoid whate'er there is to bother,
While the past may be forgot.

We will let that be just as it may,
If wrong we'll try and mend it;
For surely there will come a day
When after *awl* we'll send it.

With the *thread* arranged, as we've described,
Twisting is quite in order;
The figure now shows us a how
To *twist* it hard and harder.

When one side is twisted hard enough,
We simply take the other,
And do the same thing over again,
So that the threads are worked together.

Before the ends are entirely free,
One thing around us lingers,
We take the thread, three or two in one,
Around our left-hand fingers.

A large round awl is just the thing,
To do what we call *milling;*
Two or three trips are sure to bring
From fingers to foot the filling.

Now our thread is very smooth,
But we try to make it smoother,
By using a piece of cloth to rub,
When done, free all together.

Something now is sought that *sticks,*
Commonly known as *wax;*
And often one gets in afix
When he finds it with the *tacks.*

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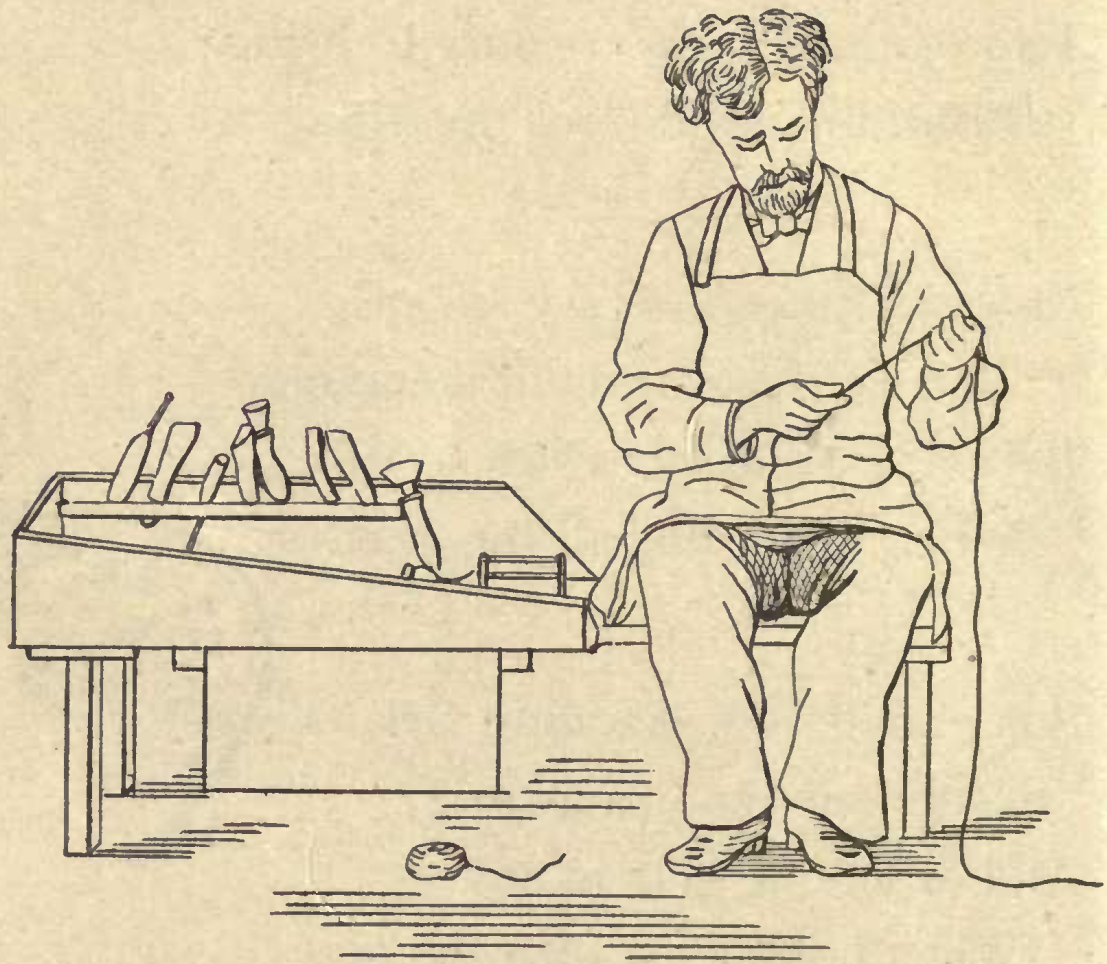


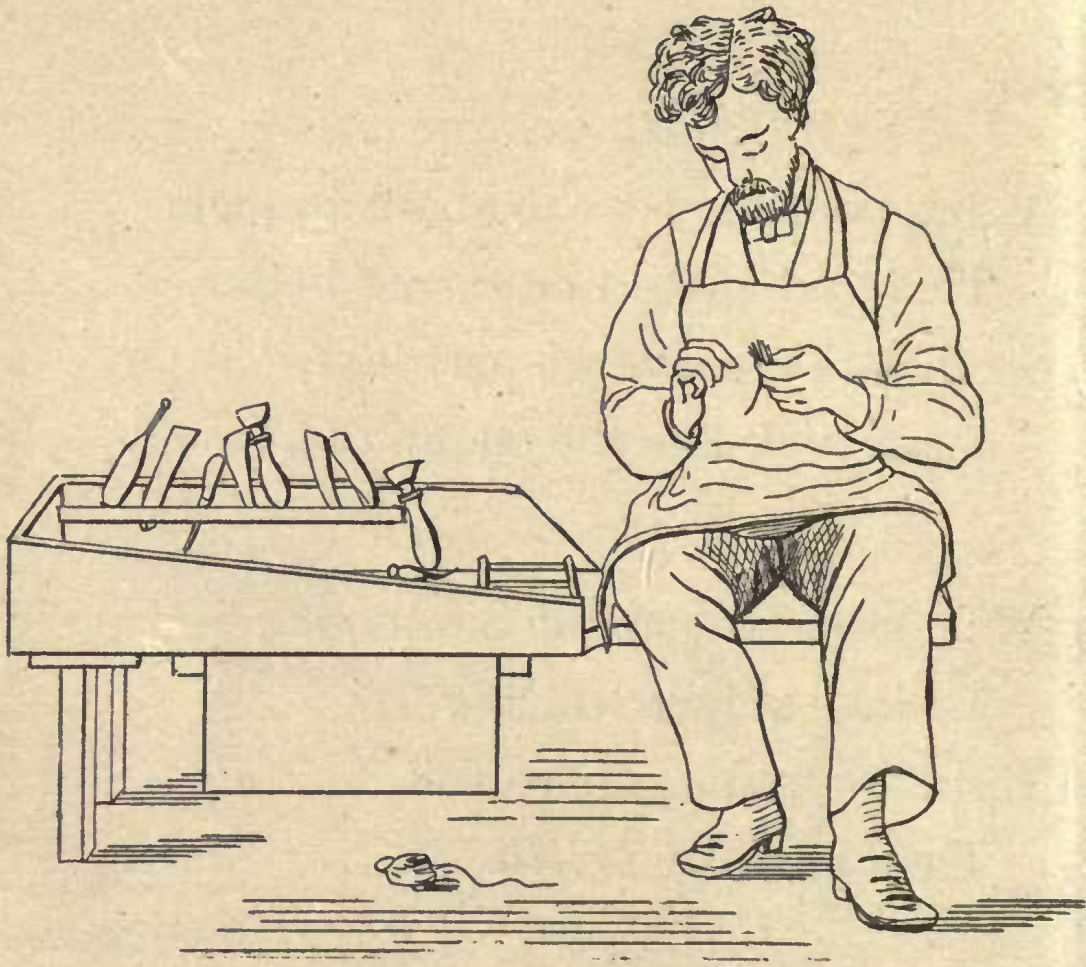
But *wax*, not *tacks*, is what we want,
To make our *thread* quite nice;
We catch it in the middle,
And to the end wax thrice.

Each time *waxing* briskly,
Not stopping on the way,
For if we do we'll miss it,
And perhaps will have to stay.

Our *wax* should be in season,
Soft wax in winter use—
Hard *wax* in summer—reason,
Holding together our *shoes*.

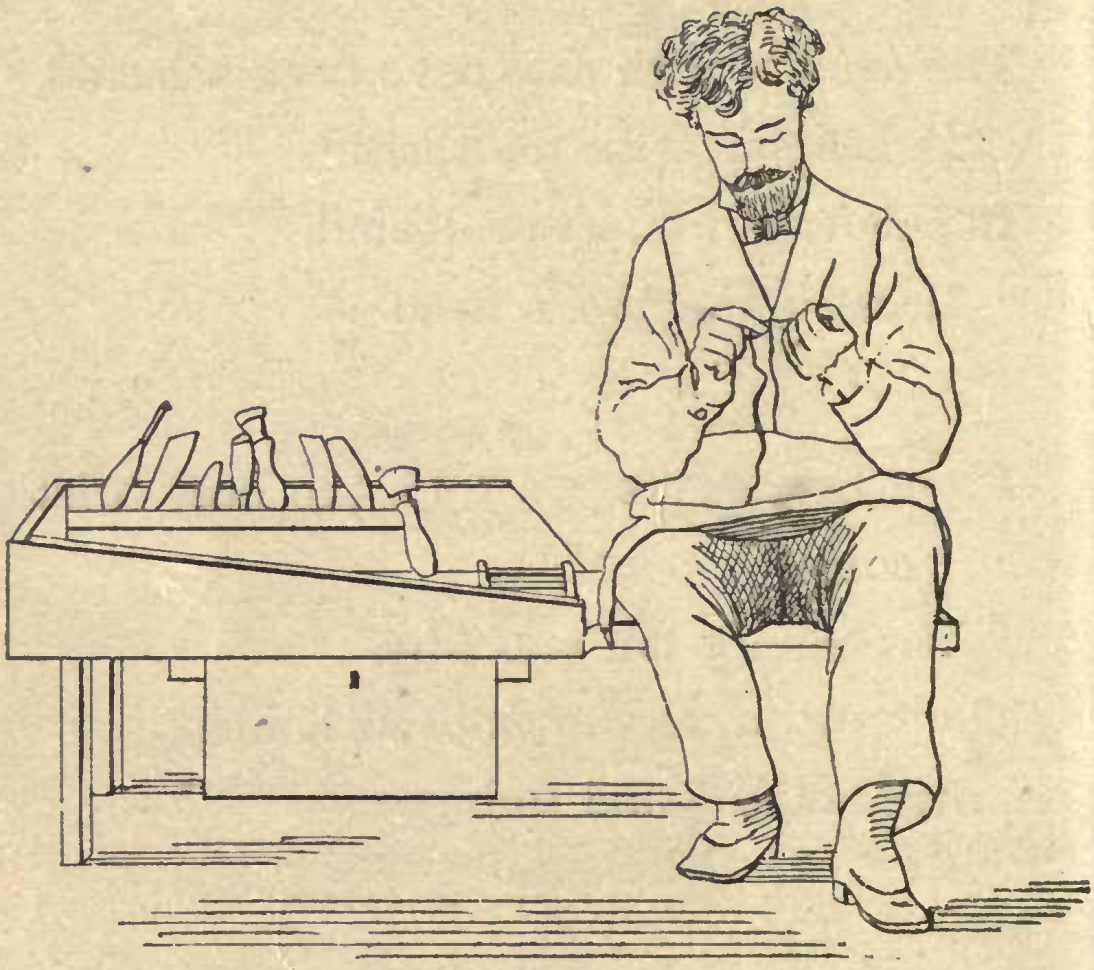
A fine point now we're about to make;
This part should be *waxed* better,
So that the *bristle* we may take,
Shall stick like the stamp of a letter.

We'll stop here about the thread,
To take a little whistle,
Until we find a pair to suit,
Then begin to *bristle.*



The *bristles* with care have been selected,
In keeping with the thread,
In this case we feel protected,
Because the *hog* is dead.

From Russia, we are told, the best bristles come,
But cannot tell you why,
The *hairs* upon our *hogs* at home
Are not so good to buy.

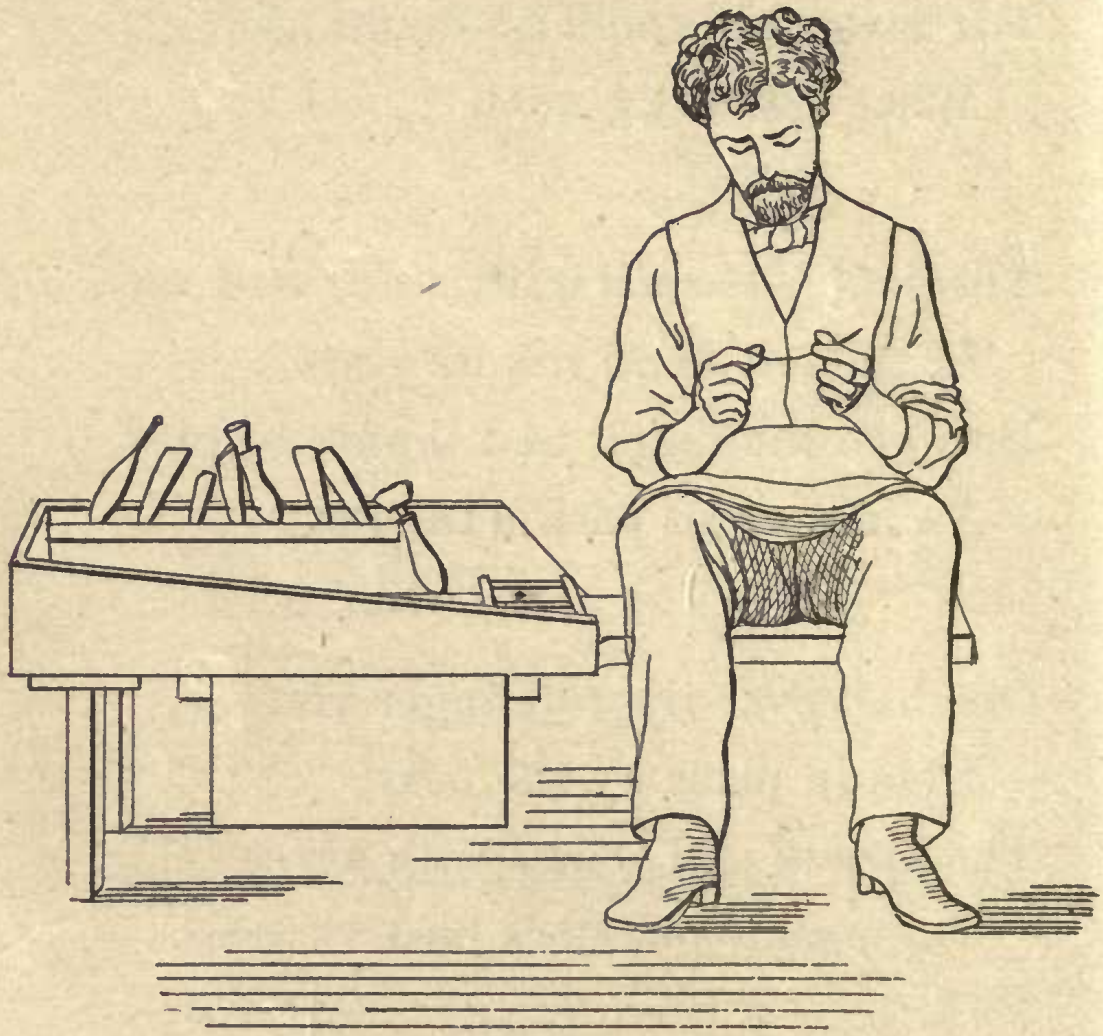


The union of thread and bristle, now,
Will keep us to our text,
For from this you'll no doubt see
What is coming next.

The *bristle* is *split* a little o'er half way,
In the left hand has its place,
Between the finger and thumb to play
An important part in the race.

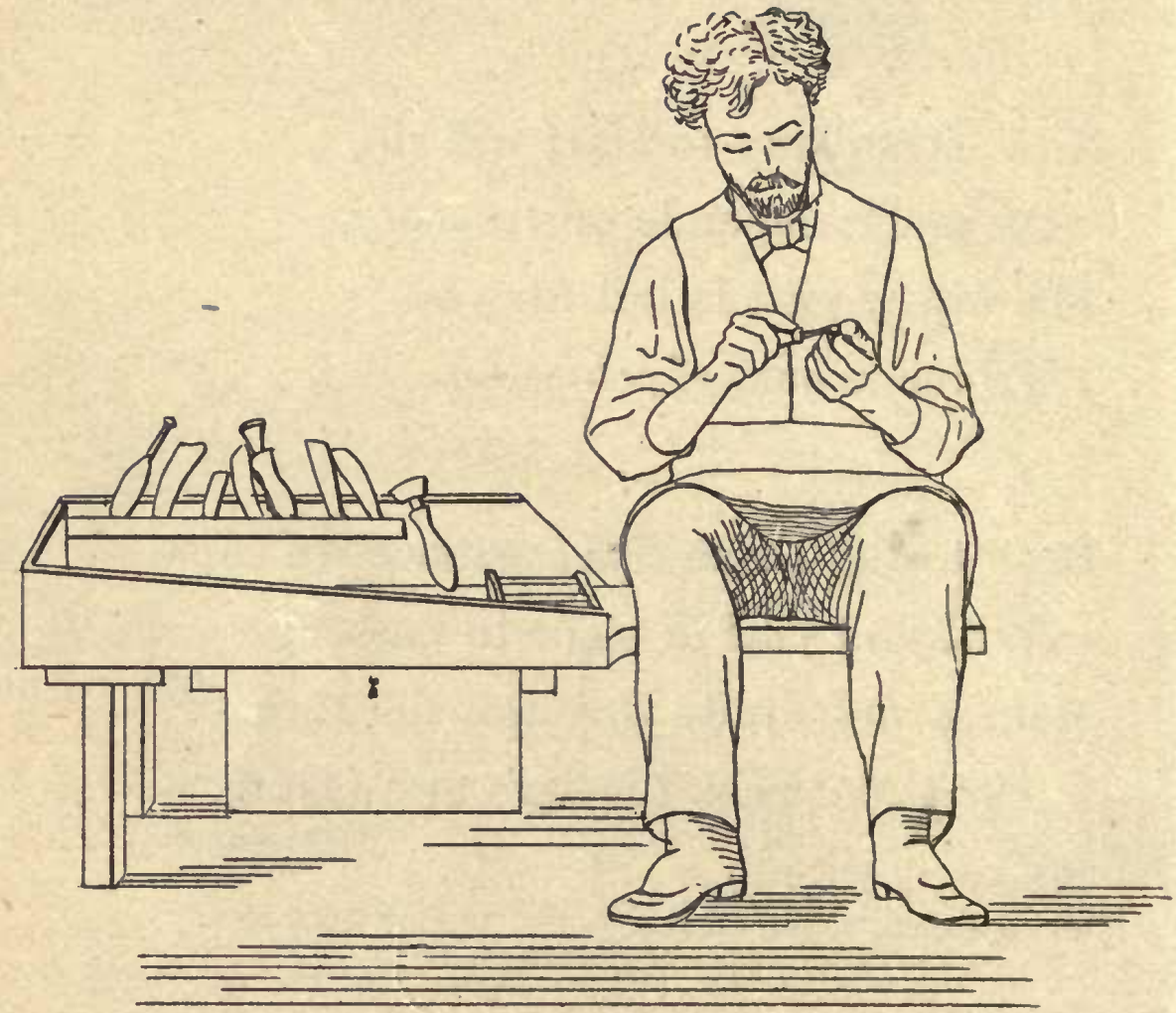
One-half over the forefinger you see,
Held in place by the next,
The *thread* and *bristle* both agree
To be thus placed is best.

Do not *split* but roll it on,
Some have said and done,
By *waxing* the *bristle* where the other is split,
And continued from sun to sun.



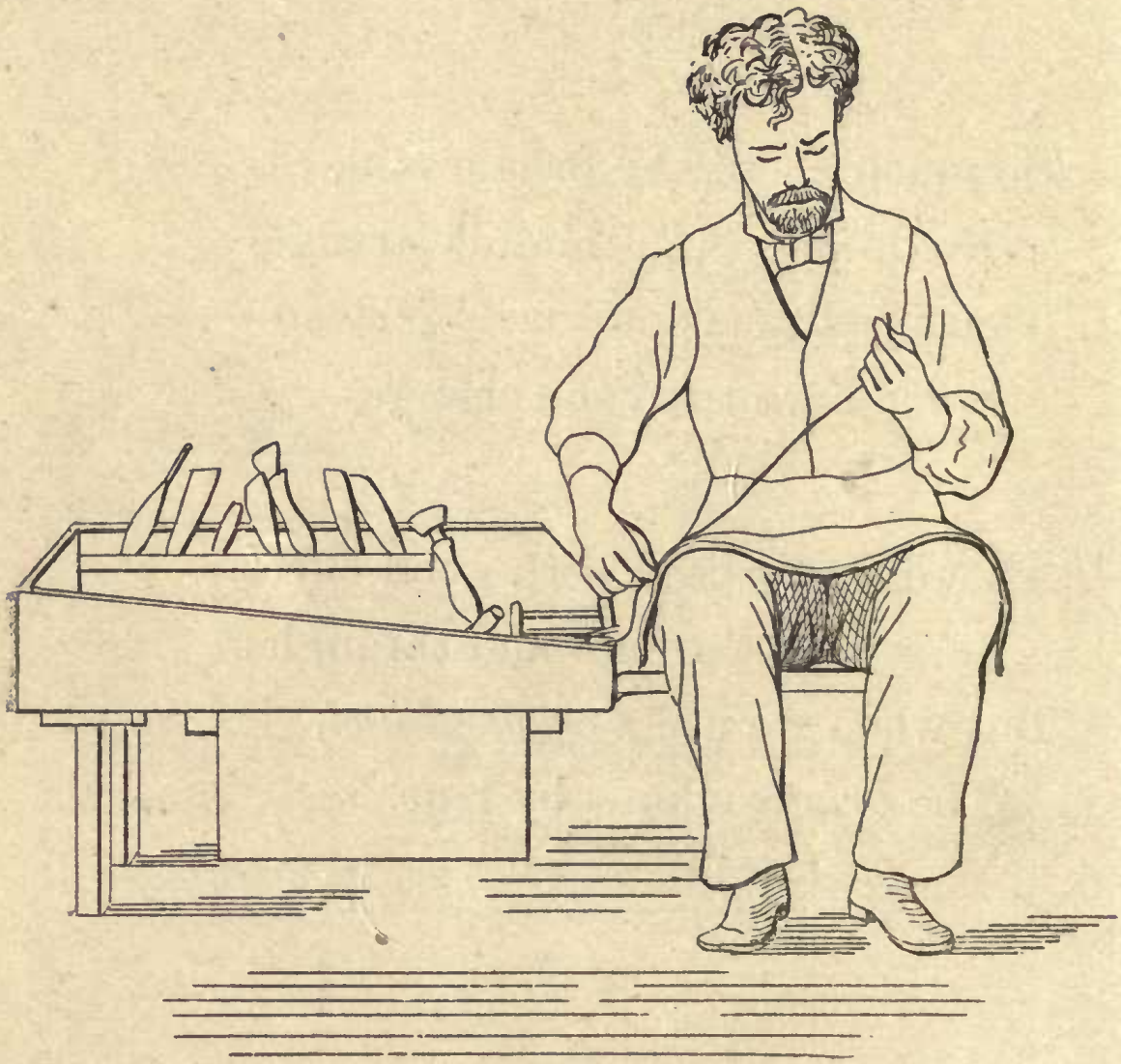
Now either way to start will do,
As much depends on *twisting*,
The *hairy* part is left for you
To make sort of *whisting*.

Back to the scene from whence we came,
With our *end* in place to hasten,
Make a *hole* quite through the thread,
The *point* pass through and fasten.



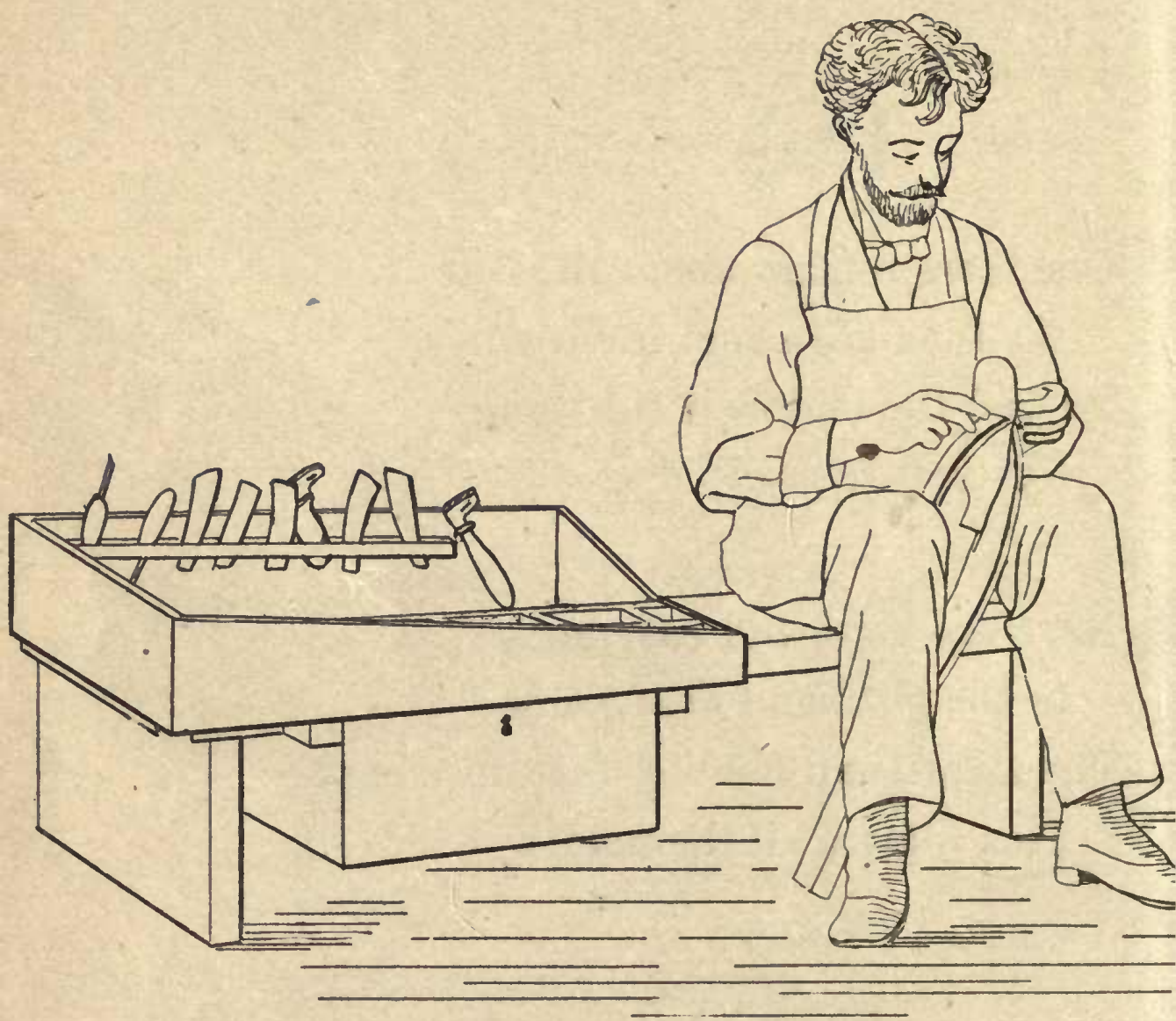
So much about the bristle said,
No doubt you'll think it strange
That needles are not used instead—
Some have tried the change.

They may be used with good effect,
In sewing through and through;
But when we use a *crooked awl*,
The *bristle* stands by true.



One more remark about the *end*
We thus have kept in view,
To find the middle is the thing
Now left for us to do.

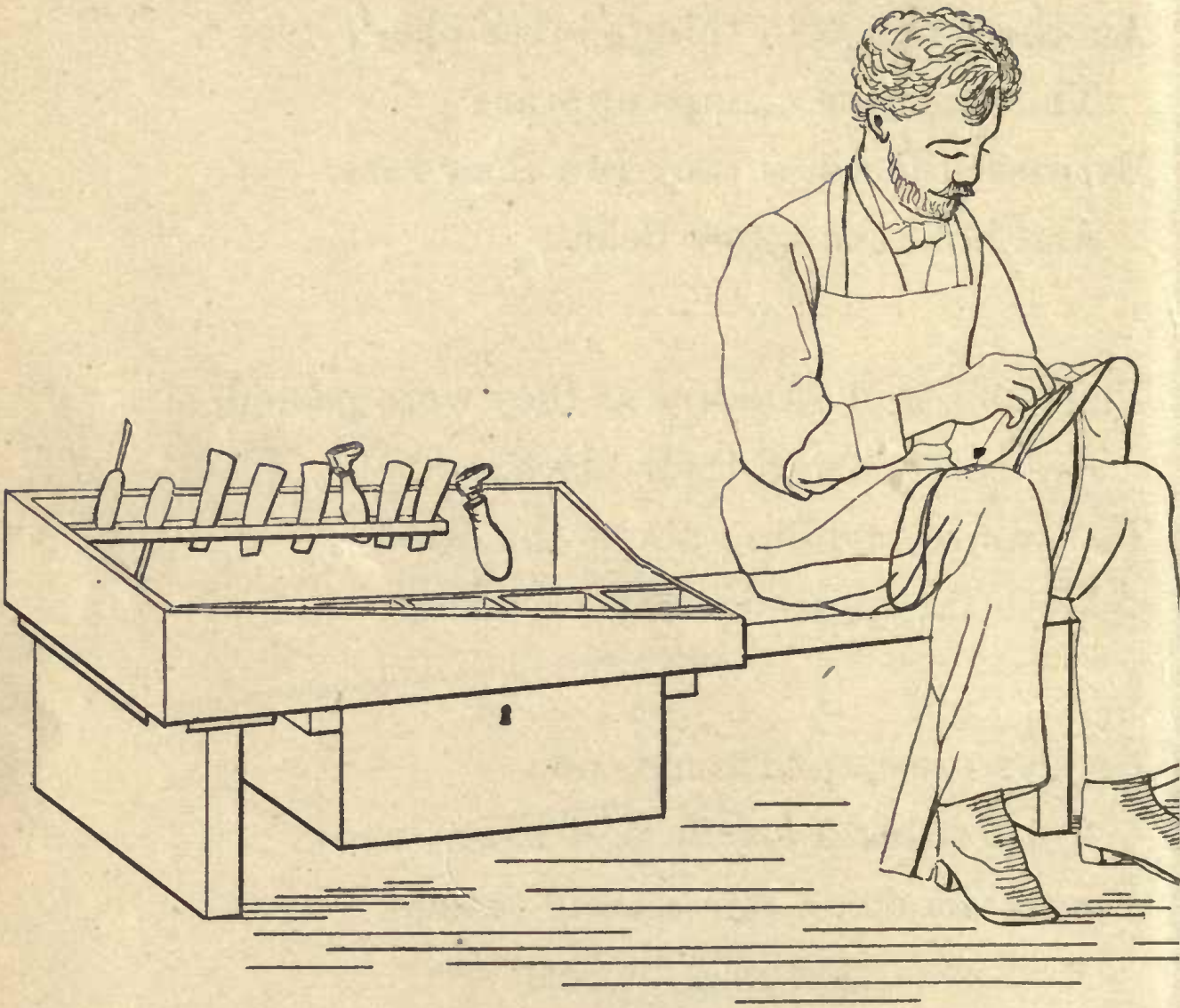
Not very hard, but easy quite;
In the left hand even joints—
The right hand holding the other end,
This fills up all the points.



Another change in things takes place,
This time the clamps appear;
Between the *knees* they run their race,
And hold the *upper* dear.

The *vamp* and *quarters* as they were pasted,
Are seen now in their place;
The vamp extending above the clamps,
With the *quarters* easy to trace.

Begin to *sew* at extreme end;
Put left-hand *bristle* first in;
Across the *vamp* our *sewing* extend,
Two *rows* that may be seen.



This nicely done, just change a little;
The position is clearly seen
When we have this *quarter* stitched near the back,
Say half inch in between,
Pull through one thread and tie it tight,
On the inside to be left;
Begin to *sew* the other quarter,
Close at the *vamp* is right.

Sew to the *back*, and then begin
Another row up the front;
Sew to the *top*, 'twill be no sin,
But the doing of what is wont.

These rows, half an inch apart,
Will serve the present state,
Because now we have a splendid start,
And getting on first rate.

Then down the *front* on the other side,
To the *vamp* be sure to go;
Never allow your work to slide,
But take it out just so.

The *front* is sewed, the back is not,
But it will be very soon;
This must never be forgot,
As it takes up part the room.

The *out-sides* together at the back are seen,
As we are about to sew
A little *strip*, put in between,
To make it stronger grow.

Down to the bottom we'll sew the way,
Until it is complete;
Then *trim* the *seam*, and rub it well
With a *bone* found on the *seat*.

You will observe the *back* is changed,
The *linings* are together ;
This can be quite well arranged
By *whipping* down this *leather*.

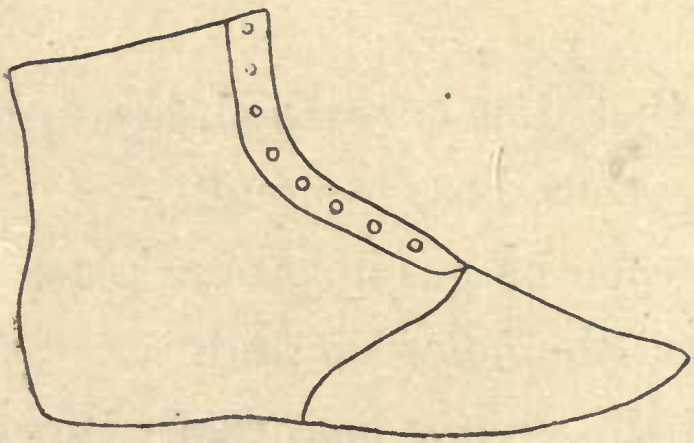
Either whipping over and over, or through and through,
Just as the case may be ;
Neither way is very new
As we may clearly see.

But we should do it, and *rub* down *flat*,
For now the time has come
When we have had enough of that,
And our *upper* is near done.

The *upper* has now its right side out,
"Right-side out with care;"
A little stitching at the top of the back
Will make it look quite fair.
We stopped stitching, you remember well,
Before we reached the back,
When on the *quarters* we did dwell,
And left a vacant *track*.

That track now is filled up well,
Yet we do hold it fast,
Knowing that a time will come
To put it on the *last.*

Before that time is reached, however,
The *eyelets*, bear in mind,
Should each be put in proper place,
So that the *holes* we find
Will let the *strings* pass easily through,
When *punched* and *set* in straight;
We have now the *upper* for our *shoe*,
Do try and make the *mate.*



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This *upper* completed by the past,
Has made it much a treasure,
For we must also have a *last*,
And fit it up to measure.

Since we have kept our seat so long,
A change may rest our back;
So at the *bench* we'll take our stand,
Close by our friend, the *jack*.

The Bailey jack is the name of this
One, screwed down upon the *post*;
For general use it will not miss,
But serve our end the most.

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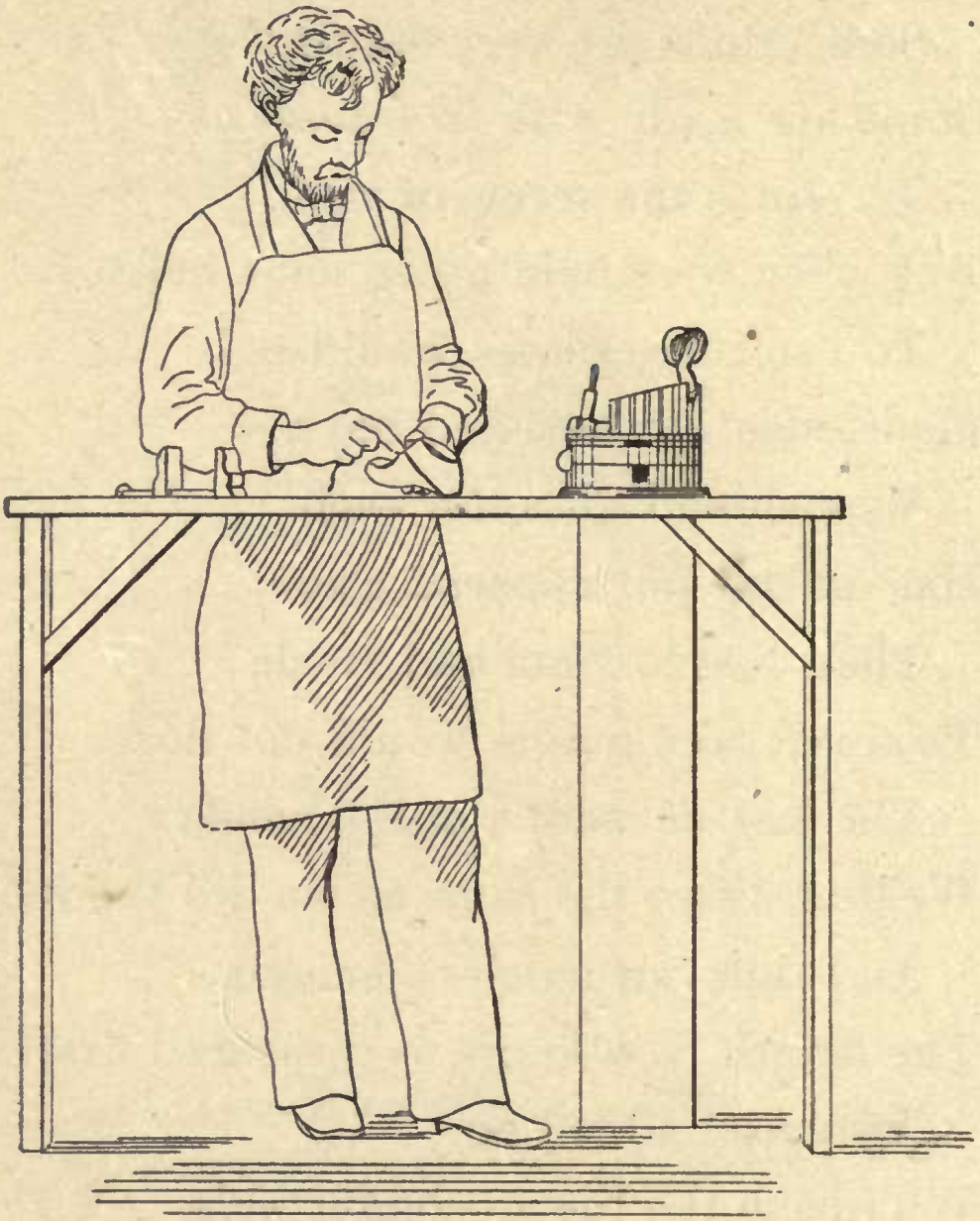
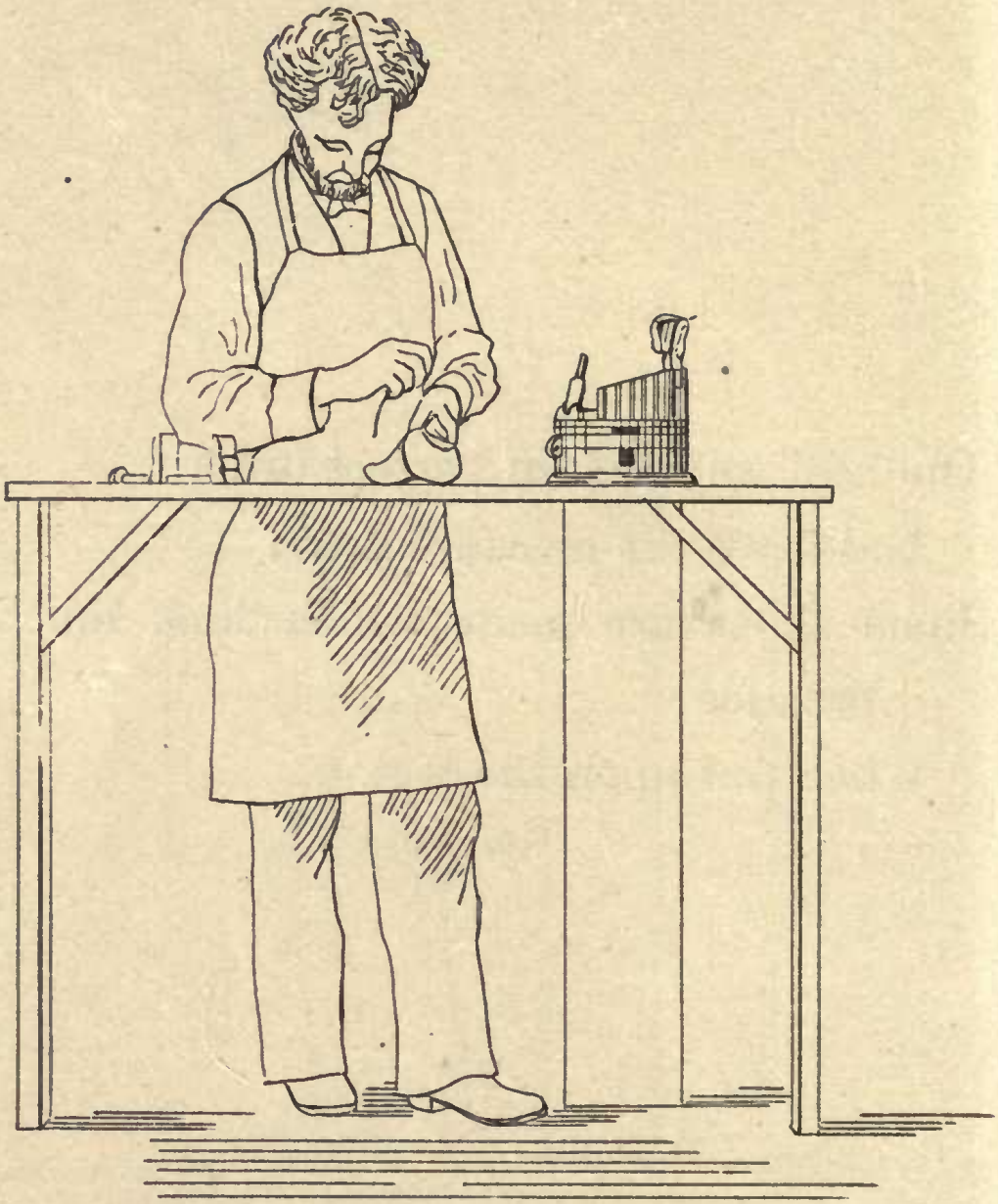
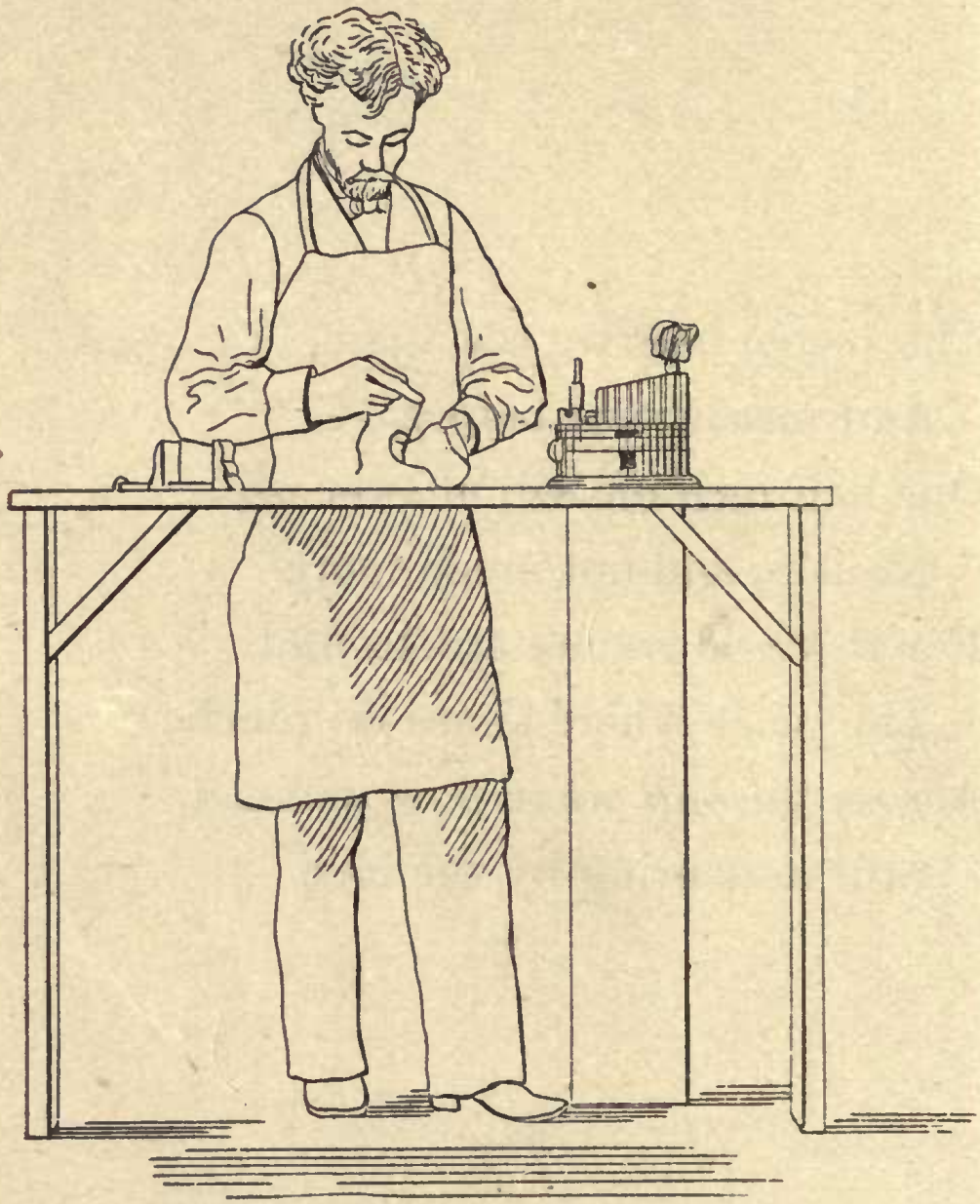
Lasts are made of many woods,
Of ash, of oak, and maple ;
Well seasoned is this stock of goods,
Some kinds are very staple.
Some are made with *iron plates*,
To *clinch* the screw or nail,
But when we would a peg shoe make,
To use these plates would fail.
Made, also, for men and boys,
Women and girls, for each
Has on this *art* a special claim,
Their feet to train and teach.
To dwell here longer would not do,
The last we want's in the hand ;
We'll measure the same as we did the foot,
And thus our *trade* command.
The length, you know, is measured first ;
Two *sizes* added on
Will make the toe so comfortable,
We should like to sing a song.



The heel we reach in perfect order,
And leave the measure neat;
Some shoes are made which look much broader
When put upon the feet.

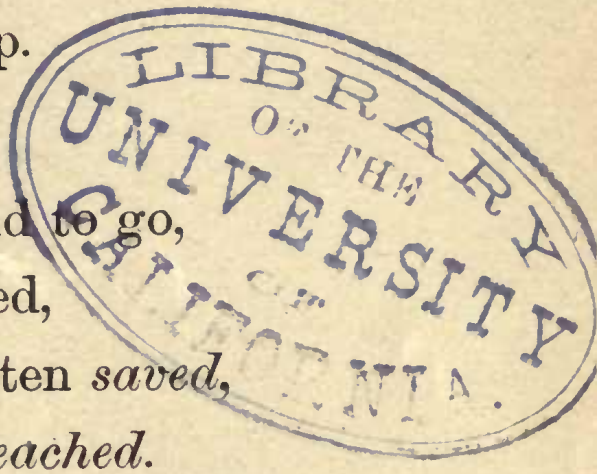


The *instep* now we see again,
And measure as before,
One-half inch off will answer us,
No less, and not much more.
For if we do we are apt to find
The place where shoes do pinch;
Across the *ball* we're now inclined,
Still measuring by the inch.



This is at times a tender spot:
Bunions develop there;
And when they do 'tis not forgot,
We may be e'er so fair.
One-quarter *size* we leave off here,
As on our way we go,
Travelling on, without a fear,
Until we reach the toe.

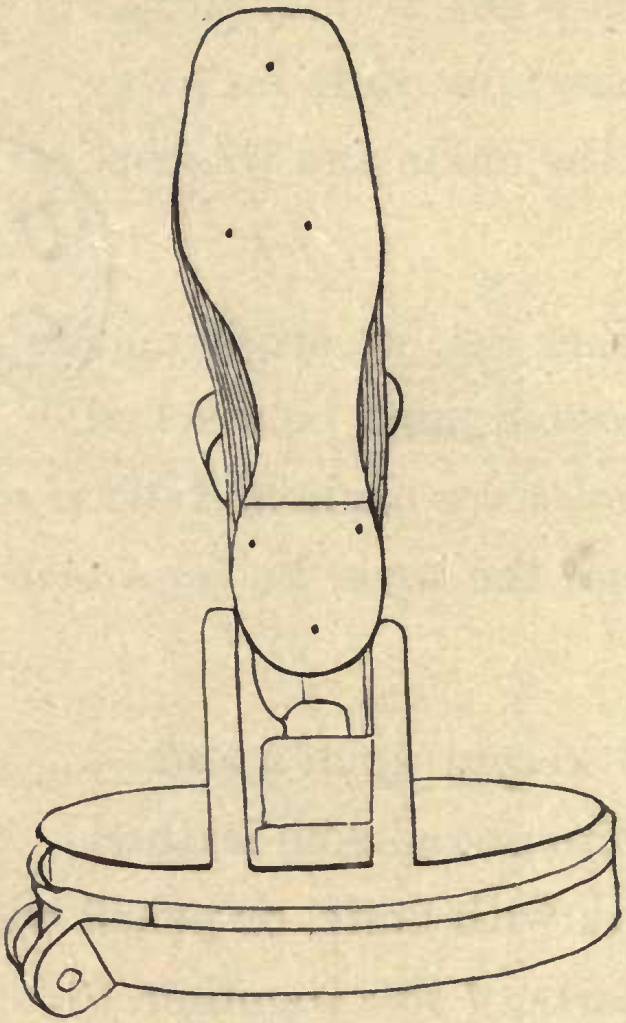
Another quarter we would say,
At this point we may drop,
For we are now quite far away
From the ankle and the top.



But further yet, we are bound to go,
The *bottom* must be reached,
Where *soles* are made and often *saved*,
'Though the *saver* be *impeached*.

The *last* we put upon a *side*
Of white or red sole leather,
And mark with knife, or pencil wide,
The parts of *sole* together.

The parts are known, each one defined,
Inner and *outer sole;*
A *middle* one, when we are kind,
Lifts and *shank piece* make the whole.



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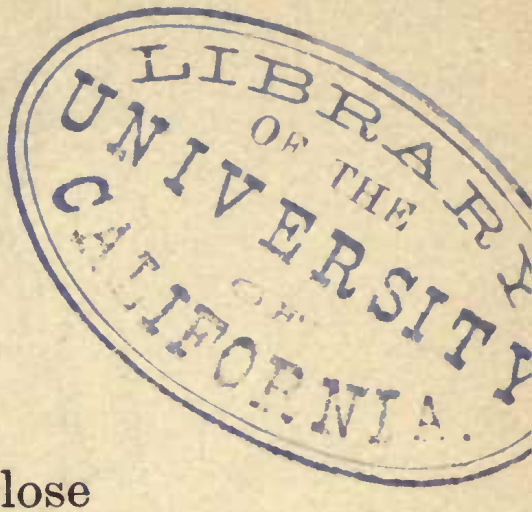
The *inner sole* on the *last* is put,
The *pegs* just where you see
Keep the sole where it belongs,
In order to agree.

The edge is bevelled from heel to heel;
The mark across the breast
Shows us when and where we may
Take a little rest.

The *upper* straight upon the *last*,
With the *seams* appearing right,
The stiffening smooth just at the back,
Will draw upon our sight.

This should be done when we begin
To draw the upper over,
So that the *last* in all its parts
Shall have a proper cover.

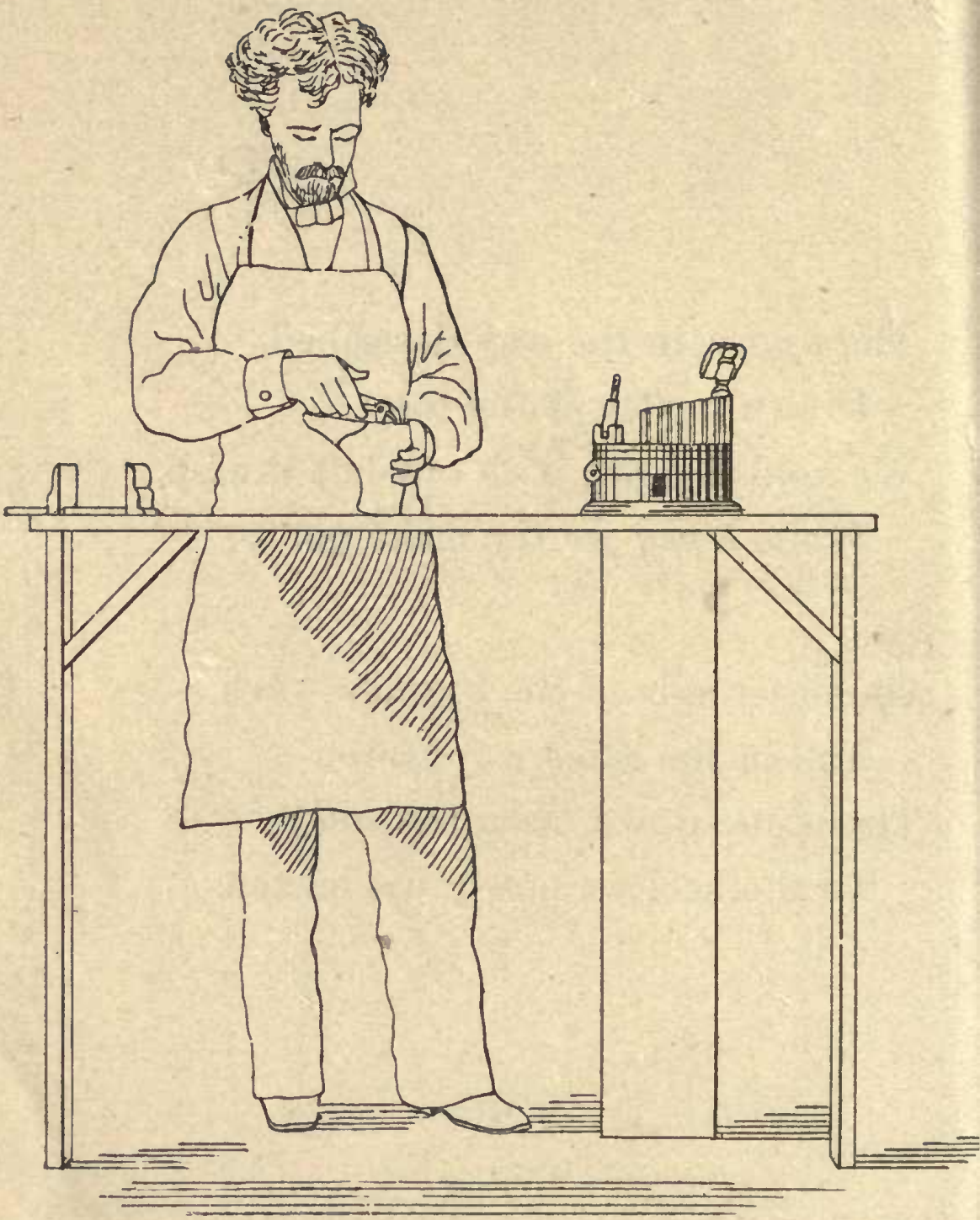


Draw steady, until we have it close
At the heel and at the toe;
If these parts should be too loose
It would nearly spoil the shoe.

Draw steady, or you'll make a crack,
Which will there remain;
Perhaps may cause us to go back,
And do it over again.

The *upper*, in the way described,
Drawn gently at the toe,
We hold it down with our left thumb,
While a *peg* we try make go.

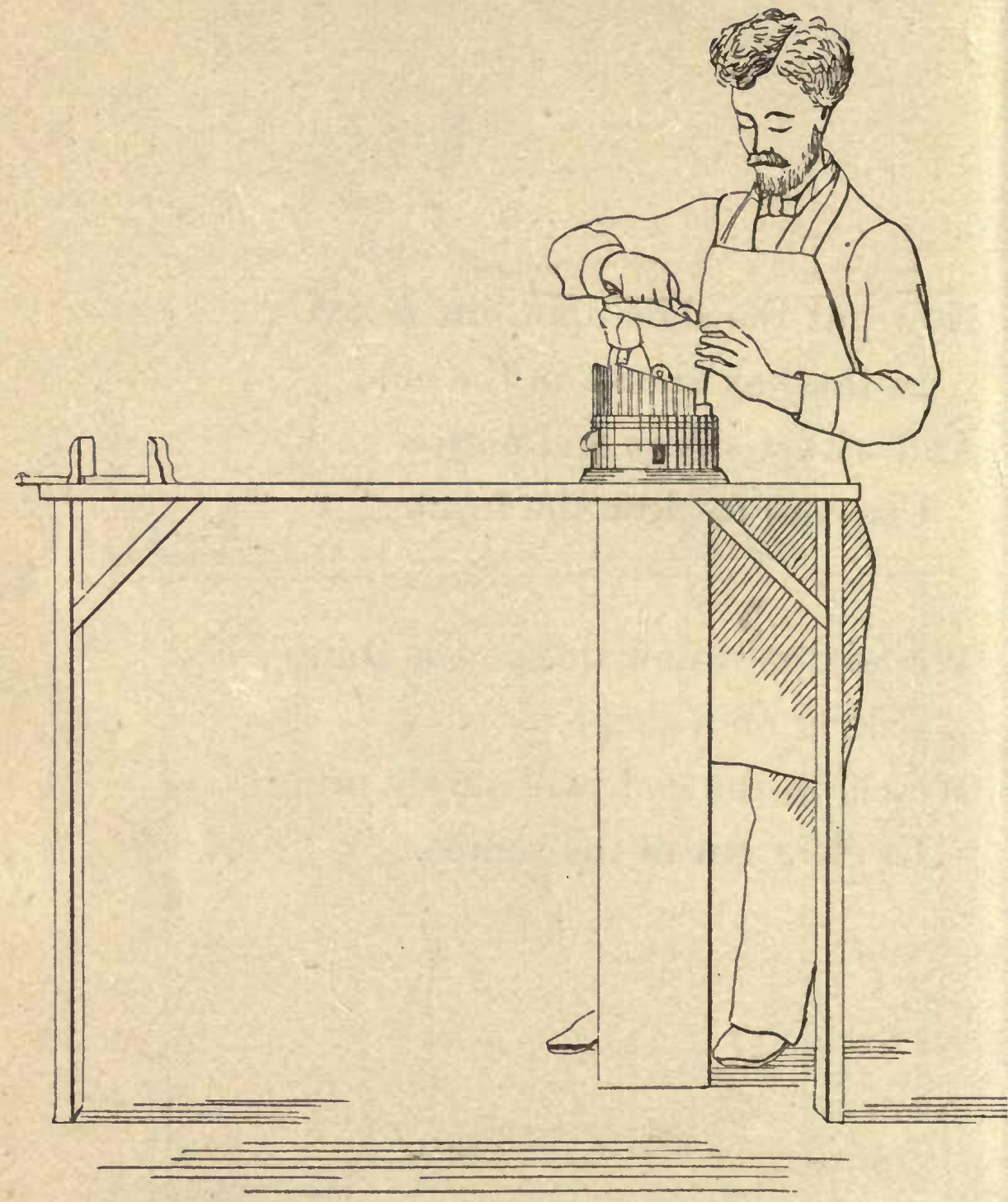
On either side of the toe now work,
And in the same way fasten
The *upper* down upon the *sole;*
To the heel we now must hasten.



Let the upper at the *seam*
Have now a secure tack;
The stiffening, all straight in between
The *lining* and the *back.*
Be sure you get the lining smooth,
The part inside the shoe;
If it is not, you may sometime
Have a thing to make you blue.

Now put the shoe upon the *bench*,
In the way shown in the cut;
And with a *string* and *button*
Use care to close the front.

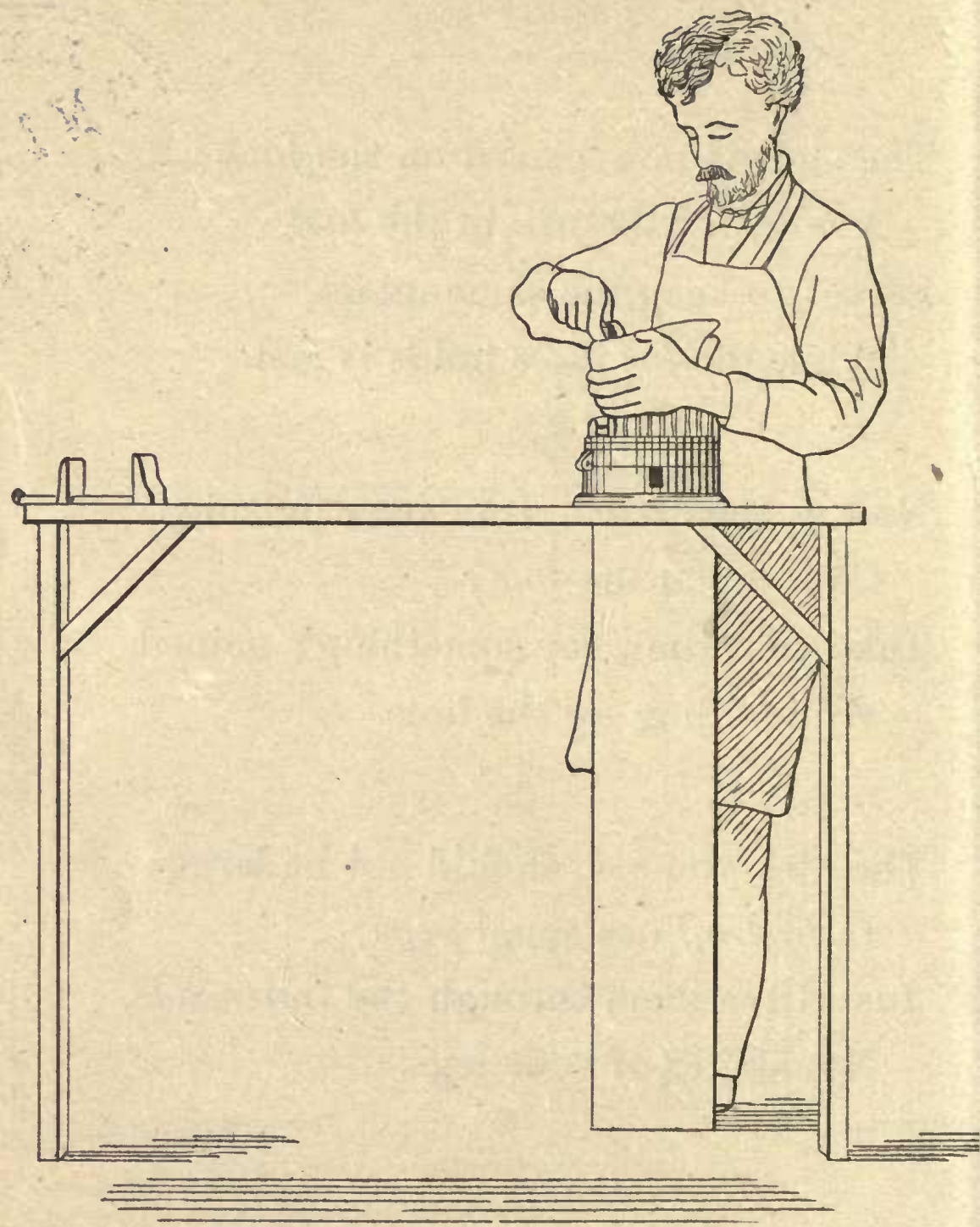
We no doubt now do see the thing
Taking on a shape,
Which, in the end, will surely bring
Us clear out of the scrape.

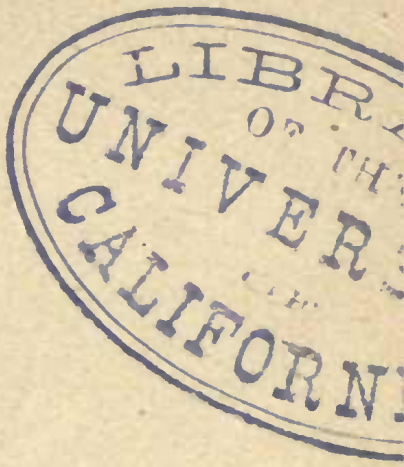


The shoe is now placed on the *jack;*
A *hole*, for the *pin* in the *last*,
Serves to keep the same intact,
While the *toe piece* holds it fast.

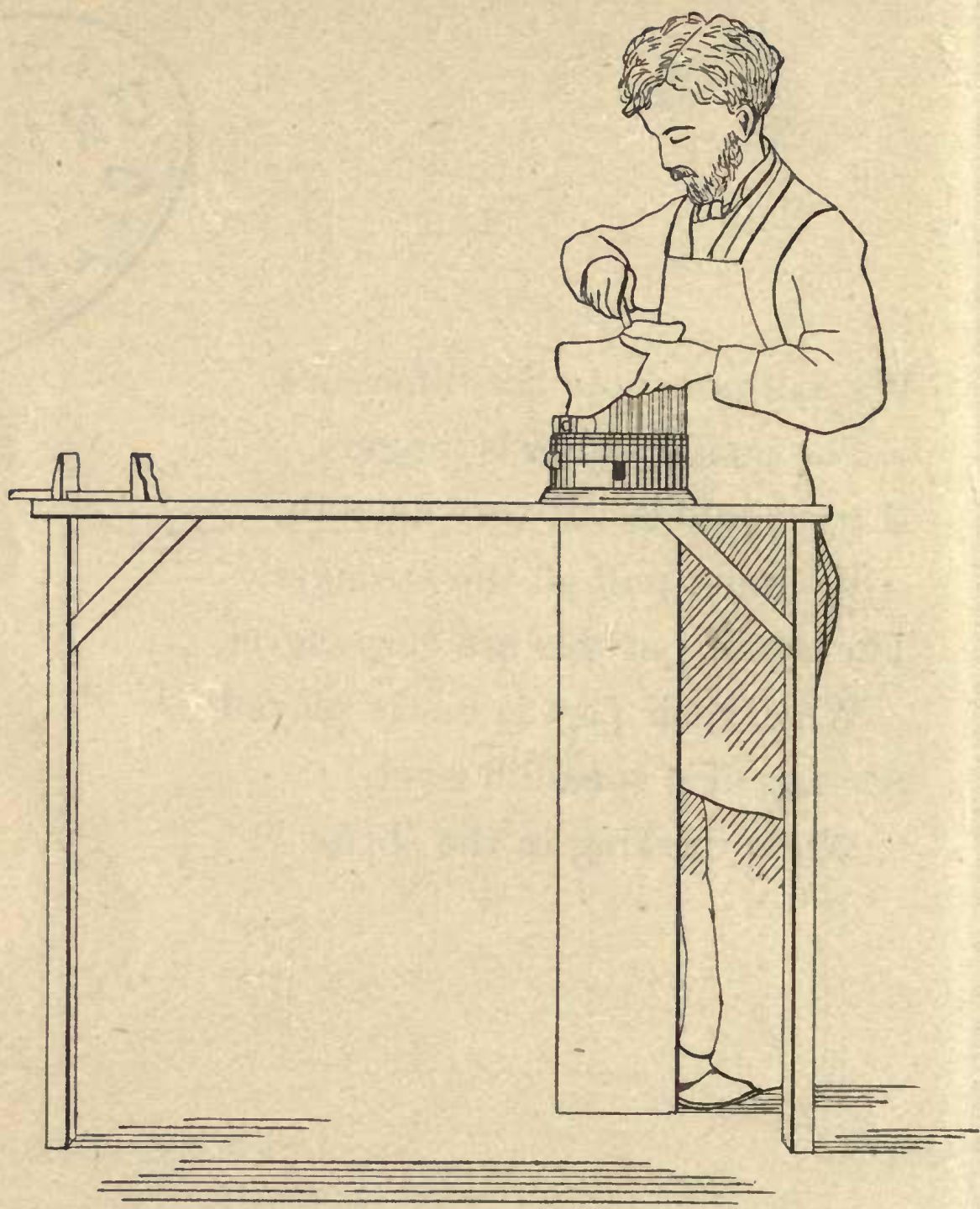
Now at the *breast*, draw over outside,
Close upon the *sole;*
Take your time, for something's gained,
While filling up the hole.

The awl, you see, should not be large;
In *lasting* use small *pegs;*
Just drive them through the *inner sole*,
No danger of your legs.



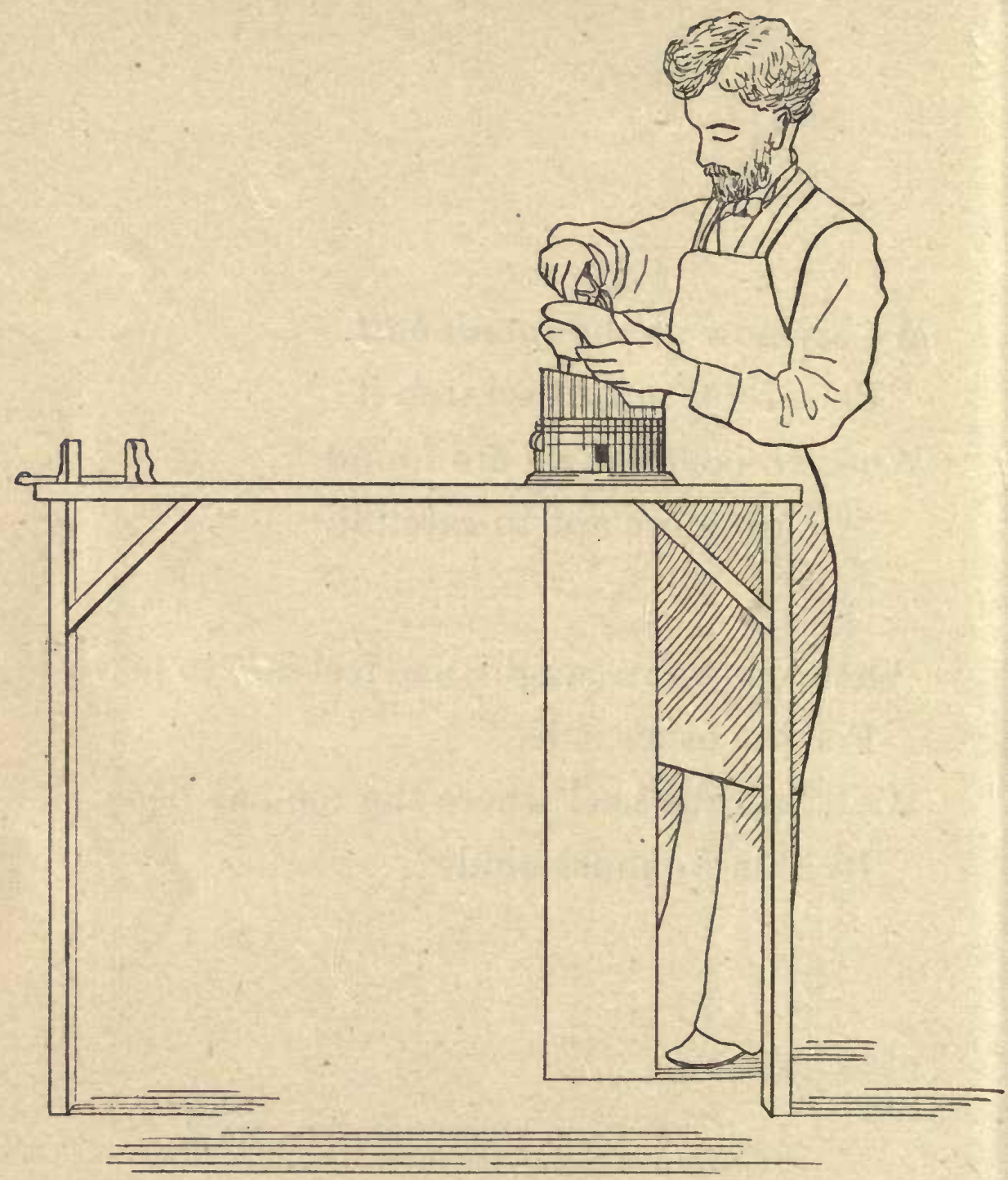


We will now note the difference:
The inside *shank* is longer;
If we would last it very smooth,
We must pull all the stronger.
The thumbs at this are very clever,
When their part is nicely played,
Serving as a splendid lever,
While working in the shade.



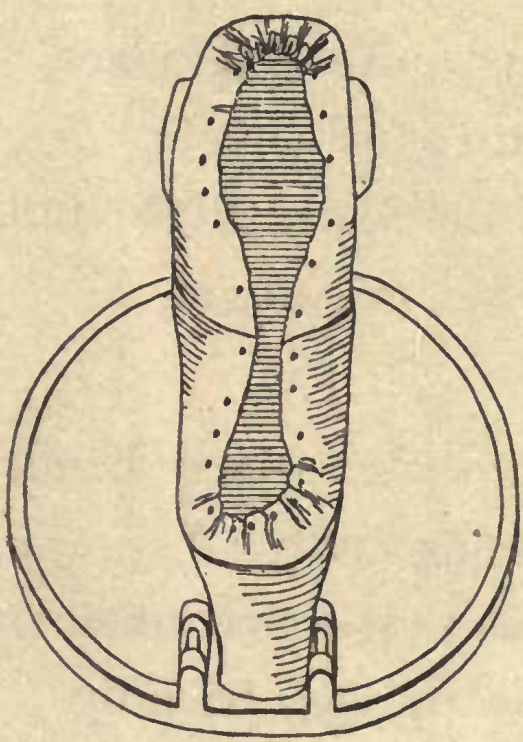
We are now at the *inside ball*—
Be careful not to scratch it;
When in position we are found
We are more apt to catch it.

When this we've caught, and feel safe to leave
For the other side,
We'll find the heel where the toe has been,
By this we must abide.



Everything quite in its place,
The future for us yet;
Let's *last* the *upper* all around,
'Till at the *toe* we get.

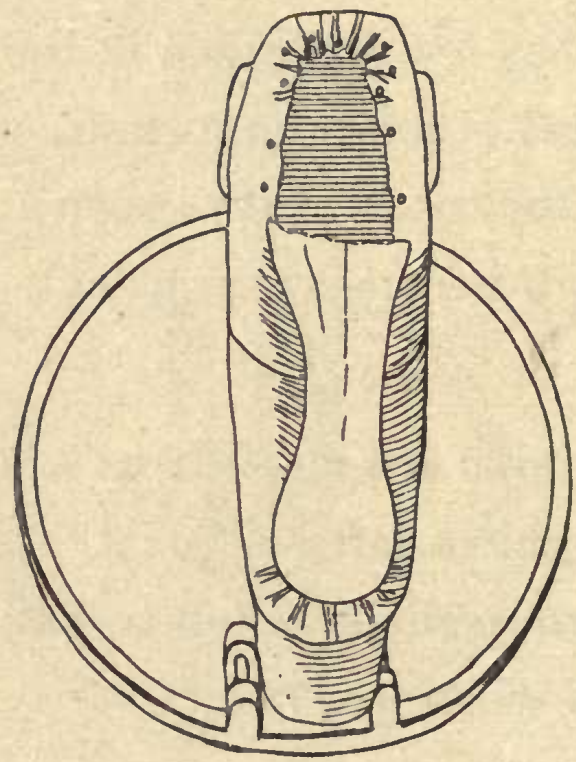
Still using *awl* in *pincer* hand,
Alternating endly,
For at this *post* we've taken stand
To grow up very friendly.



94

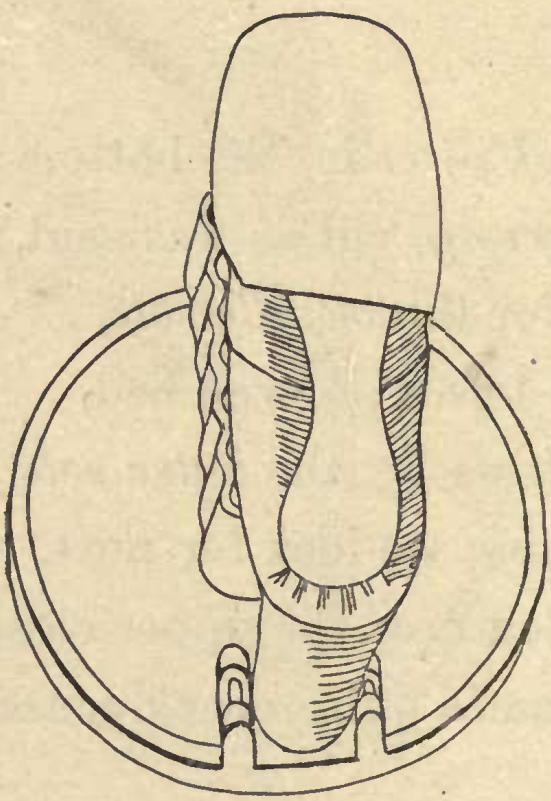
The toe has *crimps*, some in the heel;
The first is more important,
Because the toe is always seen;
If rough becomes discordant.

These *crimps* are made from left to right,
And right to left we go;
Then *scallop* them, when to be *pegged*,
Not so when it we sew.



96

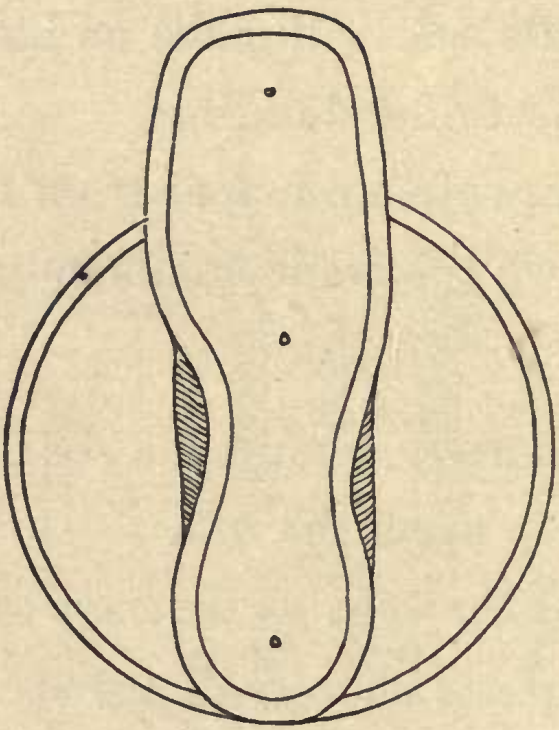
The *shank piece* in, the bottom filled,
With *crimps* cut as was said,
Already for the *middle sole*,
Which forms an even bed,
On which we lay the *outer sole ;*
The thing we look for next,
Is moulded near the upper close,
And comes quite near our text.



98

The *middle sole* will make us have
A better understanding,
And help protect our feet from frost,
While we the trade commanding.

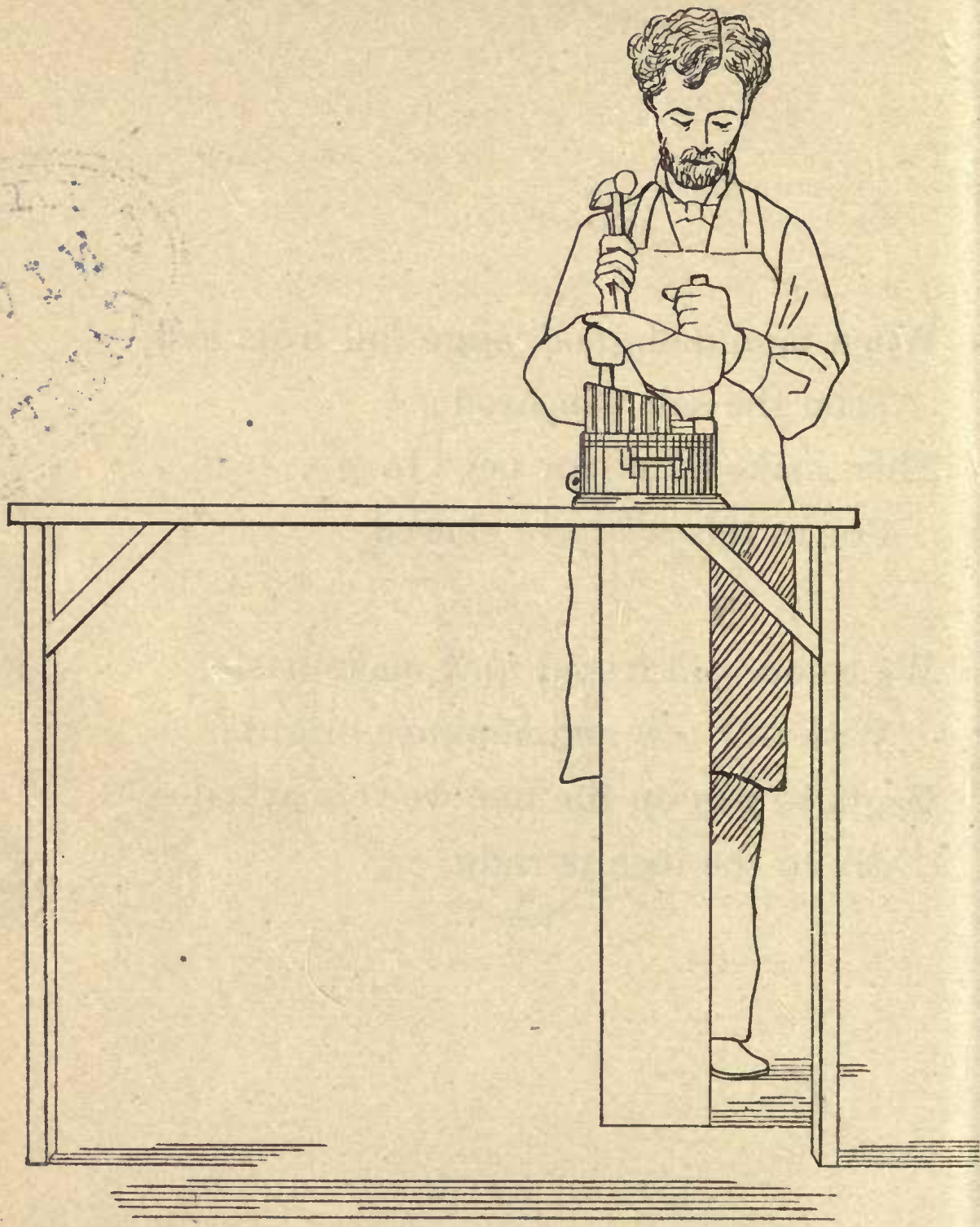
A *strap* is used around the *foot*,
The *shoe* upon the *knee;*
To mould the *sole*, as we have said,
These parts should all agree.



100

When moulded good, edge full from last,
Trim the sole prepared ;
Then make a line for pegs to go,
For in this we have shared.

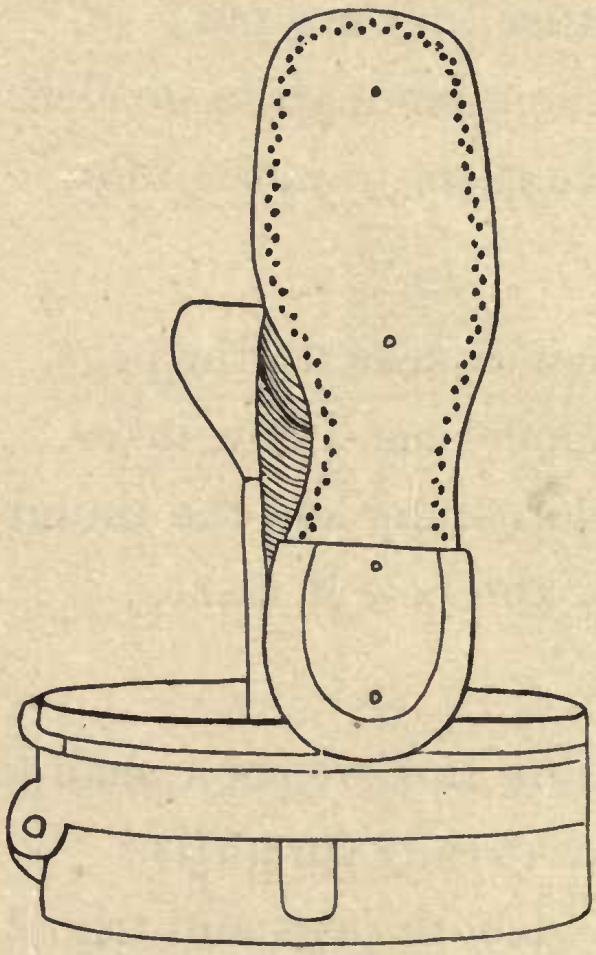
We to our old friend *jack* make haste,
With our *awl* and *hammer* bright ;
Begin to *peg* on the line we've marked—
Six to the inch is right.



Two rows around, just in between,
Each other they are put;
Use them long enough to go clear through,
But save them from the foot.

The awl-hand picks up the pegs,
The hammer-hand now takes,
Between forefinger and the thumb,
And for the hole it makes.

By repeating this we soon shall have
Our work ready for a *lift;*
But first, smooth pegs and trim *heel-seat,*
Or we'll move along too swift.

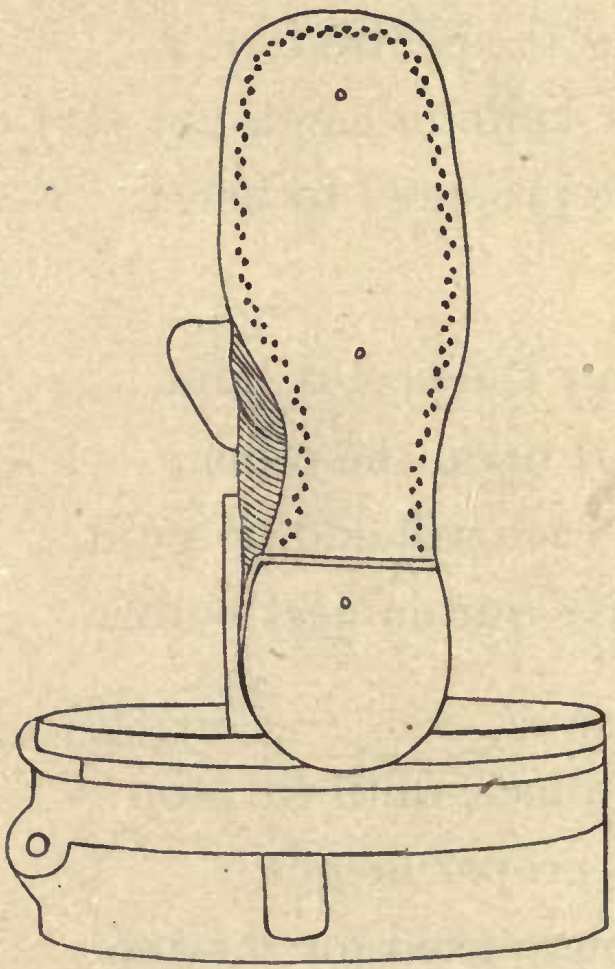


104

The first *lift* on, we'll leave it full,
Making the centre level;
With our knife in hand, not very dull,
We are prepared to bevel.

In this way the heel is built,
One *lift* upon the other;
Pegging each will add no guilt,
But save our subject bother.

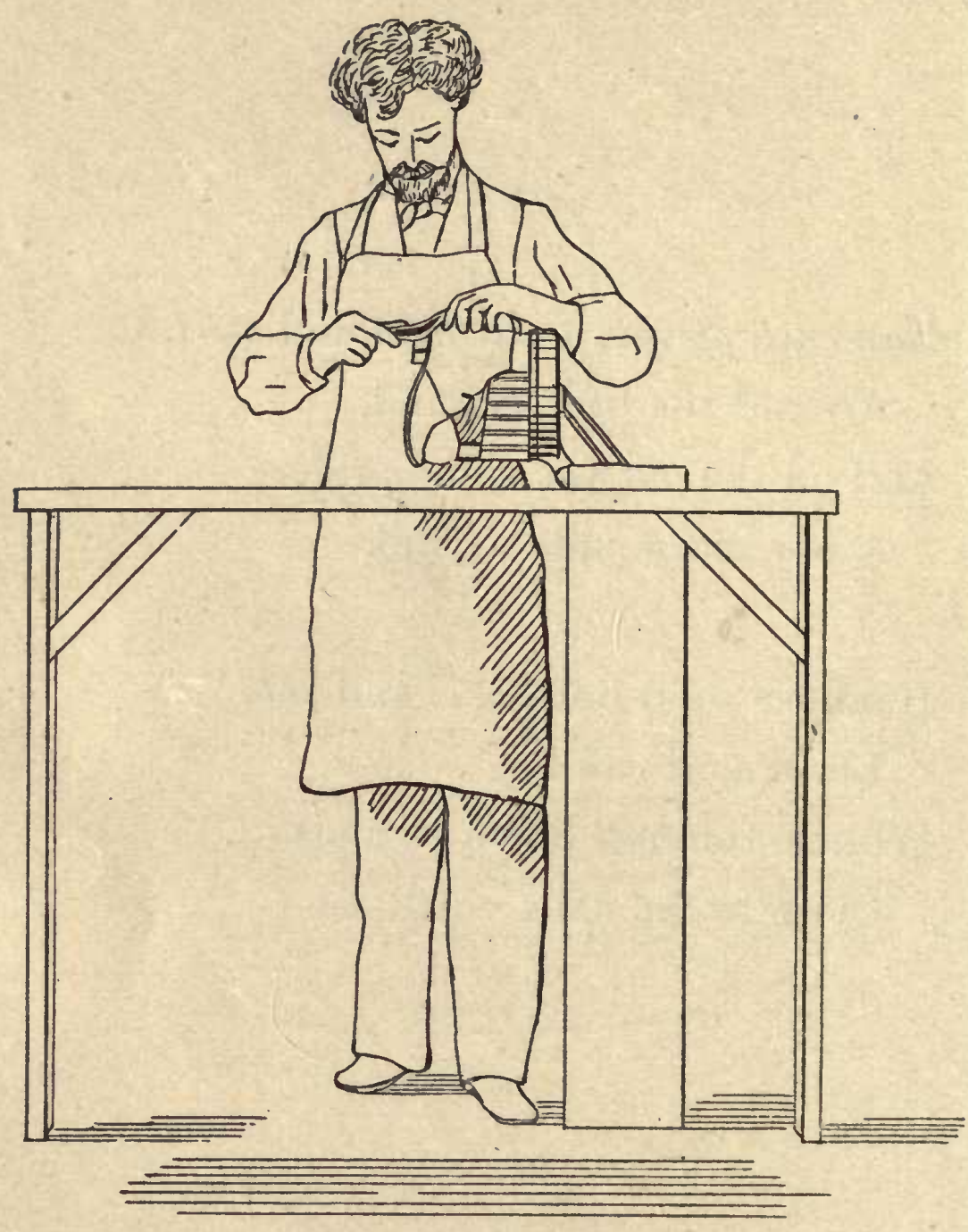
Piece by piece, until we stop
At the proper height;
A solid piece used for the top
Will make it finish right.



106

Nails are driven, both *iron* and *steel*,
Around the top, in mind,
And on the *outside* some prefer
A few more nails to find.

Hammer solid both *heel* and *sole*
Level as it can be ;
Whittle the *heel* down to a size
Close to the nails you'll see.



The heel-shave is a tool so good,
To smooth the heel up nice;
For when around it you have gone,
Its work will here suffice.

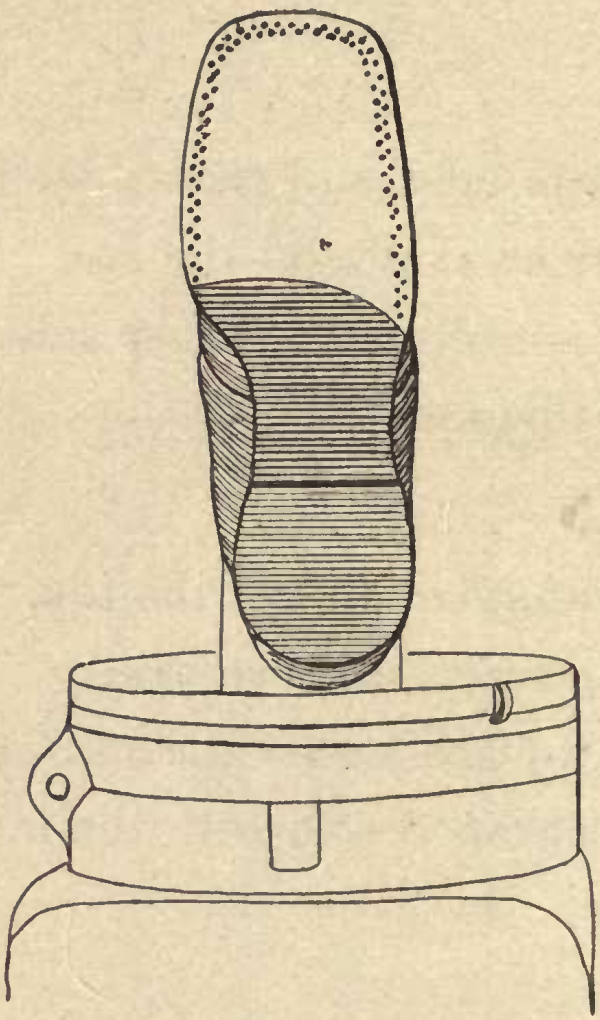
Cut down the *breast*, make it *square*,
Sand-paper it, if you please;
Then change position very fair,
And done with perfect ease.

Take out the *welt* with a *knife* to suit,
Do not cut the upper ;
This same thing is done to the boot,
And neither has to suffer.

These tools are bought in stores,
Known to the *craft* as " finding ;"
Some are here from foreign shores,
Which serve us a binding.

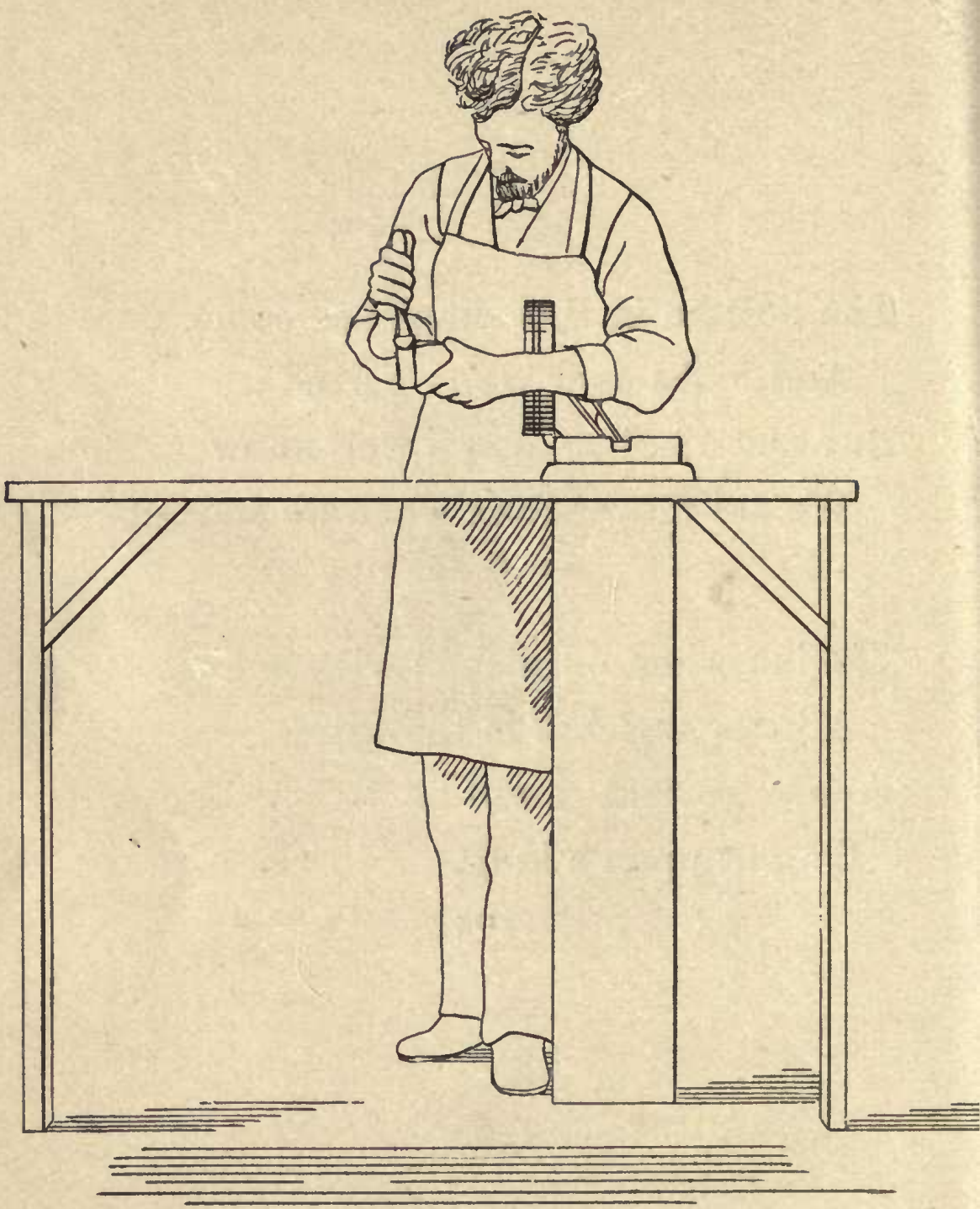
A small *knife* take, and *trim* the edge
From the heel, around the toe,
Down to the heel on the other side—
Our shoe begins to show.

The *bottom buffed*, all but the top,
Sand-paper all, now, we think ;
Just mark a place across the *shank*
To be blackened well with the ink.



The bottom in this shape has come,
And looks as if we've parted ;
But that's not so, as we well know
We are nearer than when we started.

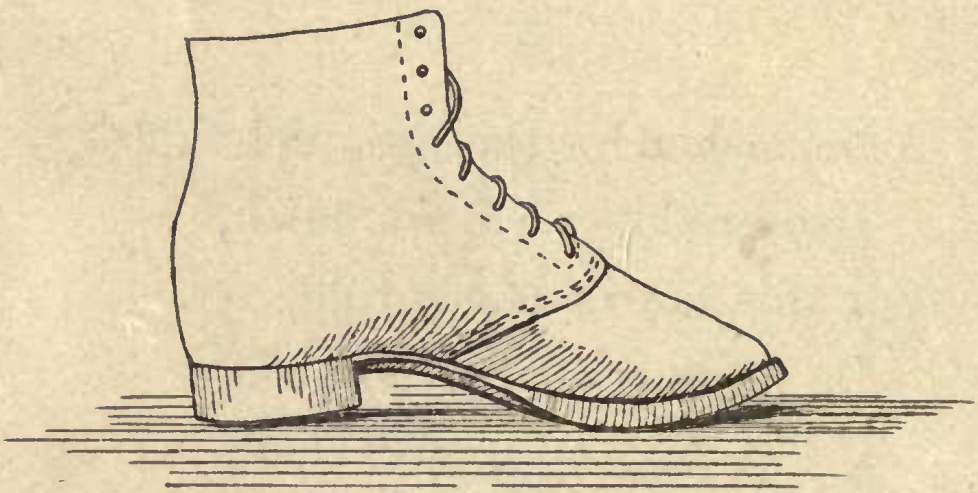
The ink when burnished with *hot kit*—
A little *heel ball* is the thing
To use, so that it will be fit
To put upon a king.



Our jack and company seen again,
The last time for the present;
To part, perhaps, will give us pain;
Perhaps be very pleasant.

A burnisher for the heel, behold!
Use briskly when we finish,
For this tale is nearly told,
Its parts seem to diminish.

Many parts have made the whole,
Some parts are much effected;
But when the parts are whole in one,
They do become respected.



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The end is reached, we trust all safe,
After quite a travel;
Though the road was rough from place to place,
The thread did not unravel.

J. P. H., Jr.

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